

TALLIS

DRAWING ROOM TABLE BOOK  
OF  
*Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs and Anecdotes*



*Engraved by Sheratt from a Daguerstypic by Paine of Kingston.*

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TALLIS'S

# DRAWING-ROOM TABLE BOOK

OF

## Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes.

MISS ISABELLA GLYN'S READINGS OF SHAKSPERE.

WE cannot commence this work more appropriately than by a notice of a kind of entertainment peculiarly suited to the drawing-room, and which is rapidly becoming as fashionable, as it is interesting and intellectual. We allude to the practice of public dramatic reading, which has hitherto been much neglected. Among the ancients, it was far more common than it has been with us; poets then recited their own verses, and philosophers published their doctrines orally in schools and lecture-rooms. In those times, books were rare and precious things, not to be obtained but by the wealthy; but then men listened to the sage or poet, and grew acquainted with his thoughts and doctrines. Now we have many books, but comparatively few appreciative readers, and with all our educational advantages, the want of cultivated public readers, who can invest the lines of the poet with the radiant glory of intellect and art; who can transform dead words into living things; who, by the magic of exquisite elocution, and a passionate, impulsive delivery can, singly, without the adventitious aids of music and scenic illustration, present to the auditor, with all the force of actual embodiment, groups drawn by our dramatic poets; is as much felt now, as in the time when a book would sell for its weight in gold.

In the present age, the great Siddons was the most distinguished public reader; from her lips the language of both Shakspeare and Milton received a greater charm; her reading had a grace beyond the reach of art, words of beauty quivered in the air, and sank into the hearts of the listeners like a fairy spell; it was genius interpreting genius. Imagination brings her to us now; there she stands before a screen of richest scarlet, dressed in a snow-white robe, whose ample folds gave her stately form the appearance of a marble statue; the listeners are charmed to a deep silence, they breathe softly and low, eager to catch every intonation of that sweet, yet powerful voice, which swells and rises to the coming climax, and then is for a moment hushed, for the audience relieve their wrought-up feelings by a loud applause.

Her younger brother Charles, now a venerable man, enjoying in private life, that comfort which should always cheer the latter days of the children of genius, has, since his retirement from the stage, exercised his talent as a public reader; and has succeeded in diffusing a greater knowledge of the poet he loved, and whose works he had devoted his life to illustrate, than could perhaps have been gained even by the most finished stage representation. For, in a reading, we have all the minor characters quickened by the voice of the great actor; the hero or the rustic, the messenger and the soldier are delineated with an equal power. His daughter, Mrs. F. Kemble, is even now delighting the world of wealth and fashion at the west-end by her Shaksperian readings; but a new candidate for public favour in this capacity has arisen in another quarter, in an actress, who, though still in the early summer of life, possessed of all the energy, grace, and attraction of youth, is yet hailed by many of the most mature and acknowledged judges of histrionic art, as the rising star who is to become the future Siddons of the stage.

We lately witnessed Miss Glyn's reading at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, of Shakspeare's historical tragedy, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and we purpose as a fitting accompaniment of the life-like portrait of that distinguished actress, which is contained in this work, to give an analytical notice of the ideal presentation of one of the greatest, yet least known of the dramas of our national idol, the player-poet, the wild, self-taught genius, to whom Schelegel alludes as the "tragical Titan who storms the heavens, and threatens to tear the world off its hinges." *Antony and Cleopatra* is the most varied and romantic of all Shakspeare's classical tragedies; every thing is there treated "in the high Roman fashion," and we have a fine representation of the pride and courage of Italy, and the magnificence of Egypt. "Shakspeare's genius," says Hazlitt, "has spread over the whole a richness like the overflowing of the Nile."

## MISS ISABELLA GLYN'S READINGS OF SHAKSPERE.

We should like to see dramatic readings always prefaced by a brief explanation, which would place the scene and circumstances of the play more forcibly before the audience; much is lost by this not being done; those unacquainted with the work cannot always understand the particulars of the story. Again, throughout the play, the reader should throw in a few connecting links of an explanatory nature, which would render the action clearer, and bind and connect the whole. Indeed, a brief running criticism might be kept up by the reader, who would thus at once be an exponent and a commentator upon the work under consideration.

But to speak particularly of Miss Glyn's performance; it was marked by a boldness and energy throughout; she never relaxed her exertions, never subsided into indifference; if, indeed, we found a fault, it would be that she sometimes did too much, and thus lacked the dignity of repose; her declamation was occasionally too warm, too passionate; her burning energy blazed sometimes for a moment beyond bounds, still it was but for a moment, and judgment instantly reassumed the reins.

The character most successfully elaborated by Miss Glyn was the voluptuous, the wilful, the beautiful, passionate, and loving Cleopatra; she made us feel the truth of Enobarbus' praise of the queenly profligate:—

Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety.

Her tenderness, her love, her tears, her smiles, the depth and extravagance of her affection for Antony, her despair and stormy gusts of passion in his absence, her rapture on his return, and her calm resignation and dignified death—

——— Fitting for a princess  
Descended of so many royal kings,

were all wonderfully and faultlessly executed. It was strange that so much dramatic power could be infused into a reading; and when in her last moments she rebukes the passionate sorrow of her maid Charmian, and pointing to the asp exclaims—

——— Peace, peace!  
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,  
That sucks the nurse asleep?

the presence of impending death seemed to give an absolute spirituality to the effort.

Her idealisation of the quaint bluff soldier Enobarbus was next in meritorious execution; this is a kind of character that Shakspeare loved—something of his own lightheartedness appears in it; this Miss Glyn seemed fully to feel, and she invested it with a rough heartiness that was highly characteristic. Her delivery of that gorgeous description of Cleopatra on the Nile; where the wanton queen sits on a throne of gold, in a barge of which the sails were purple, and the oars of silver, and from which such perfume stole, that the very winds are represented as being enamoured of the pageant, was a piece of beautiful and indeed perfect elocution. After Enobarbus' desertion of his master Antony, who mourns that his ill fortunes have corrupted honest men, the character of the bluff soldier undergoes a change: he is a repentant and broken-hearted man, and dies from a too acute sense of his own ingratitude and treason. This portion of the play Miss Glyn gave with much pathos, and made great use of that subdued impressive utterance which is the chief charm of her reading; but some connecting description was much wanting here. The length of the play compelled her to omit several scenes, and to abbreviate others; thus, to those who were not familiar with it, the despair and death of Enobarbus was scarcely intelligible. A short graphic account of the scene, too, would have added greatly to the realization of the picture, the silent night, the soft light of the waning moon, showing the distant pyramids, and the camp of Cæsar, from which is heard the roll of drums startling the silence; these just alluded to in passing would have heightened the effect of the death of Enobarbus. In the delineation of Antony, Miss Glyn was scarcely so happy; it was too trying for a female voice, and it required a powerful effort of the imagination to keep pace with the reader. Still, viewed synthetically, the tragedy was well understood, and effectively rendered; there is an earnestness and intelligence in Miss Glyn's manner, which redeems all minor errors; her conceptions are faultless, and her execution powerful and impulsive. In the warm and impassioned scenes the spirit of the poet seems to speak through her, and her face is lit up with an enthusiastic appreciation of the beautiful; she seems identified with, and ennobled by, the lofty art of which she is a votary.

We shall, from time to time, give notices of such displays of talent connected with the drama as deserve encomium, and we have in this instance spoke thus at length of a young artist, because we think the critic more generously and justly employed in raising genius from comparative obscurity, than in blazoning forth the triumphs of that which is already known and rewarded.

H. T.







MR BUCKSTONE AND M<sup>RS</sup> FITZWILLIAM,  
 AS  
 TOM DIBBLES AND THE ORPHAN NAN.  
 IN M<sup>R</sup> BUCKSTONE'S CELEBRATED COMIC DRAMA OF  
 GOOD FOR NOTHING.  
 TOM. "Now I'm not going to put myself in a passion."

*From a Daguerrotype by Mayall of 42,° Street.*

## MRS. FITZWILLIAM.

THIS most natural, and highly accomplished actress may be said to have been literally born upon the stage; for, in the dwelling-house attached to the Dover Theatre, which her father, Mr. Robert Copeland, at that time managed, in conjunction with those of Deal, Sandwich, and Margate, did she make her first appearance on the great stage of this breathing, busy world. At the early age of two years, Miss Fanny Copeland may be said to have commenced her theatrical career, as she appeared in her father's theatre as one of the children in the play of *The Stranger*. Shortly after she represented the child in *Pizarro*, when Master Betty, known as the young Roscius, performed the noble Peruvian. At the age of five years, a period when few children have done more than master the mysteries of the alphabet, she performed the character of Tom Thumb, and actually sang all the music, to the delight of a charmed and wondering audience. When she was but ten years of age, Charles Incledon, the great English vocalist, heard her sing "Savourneen Deelish," and strongly recommended her family to take her entirely from the stage, and educate her solely for music and singing. She was accordingly placed under Michael Wieppert, the father of the late John Wieppert, who gave her instructions on the harp, while Mr. Sutton, of Dover, conducted her studies on the pianoforte. She made such rapid progress, that, at the early age of twelve years, she presided at the then fashionable promenade concerts given at Howe's Assembly Rooms, at Margate. Three years were devoted to her musical studies; when, on a performance of the musical farce of *The Poor Soldier*, at the Dover Theatre, under the patronage of the Earl of Guilford, the lady advertised to sustain the character of Norah being ill, there was left no resource but to send for little Fanny, who fortunately having been in the habit of perfecting herself in the music of all the pieces she saw represented at her father's theatres, was quite ready in the part, which she performed with such success, that she determined on returning to the stage, which determination, fortunately for herself and her admirers, she adhered to, and became a leading actress in her father's theatres, acquiring that experience which must ever be the basis of a sound dramatic reputation. At this period, she was greatly indebted for the development of those brilliant qualifications which distinguish her as an histrionic artist, and, indeed, for the most valuable part of her education, to the fostering care of the late Mr. Archibald Montgomery, a gentleman of high attainments and family, and at that time a member of her father's company.

Her professional difficulties were but trifling. Fortune appears to have been as liberal to her as nature; for, at the age of fourteen, she came to London, was placed under Mrs. Bland, the exquisite English ballad singer, to improve her vocal powers; and presented herself with a letter of recommendation to George Colman, the younger, then proprietor and manager of the Haymarket Theatre: she was requested by that gentleman to attend, and give a taste of her quality before him and his co-managers, Messrs. Morris and Winston, when, to their complete satisfaction, she sang "The Garland of Love," from the melodrama of *Tekeli*; and, on being asked what characters she had performed, she produced a large sheet of foolscap paper, containing a long list of parts, such as the Duke of York, the Prince of Wales, and Lady Anne, in *Richard III.*; Prince Arthur, Blanche, and Lady Faulconbridge, in *King John*; and a multitude of characters in all the tragedies, comedies, operas, and farces of the period. George Colman, on glancing over this formidable list, exclaimed—"Aye, aye, I see—manager's daughter—plays everything." However, she was immediately engaged, and made her first appearance before a London audience at the Haymarket Theatre, in the character of Lucy, in *The Review*; this was followed by her assumption of the Page in *The Follies of a Day*; Cicely in *The Beehive*, &c. Her success in these characters may be estimated by a relation of the following singular incident. That admirable comedian, the father of the present Mr. Charles Matthews, possessed, in conjunction with much natural goodness of heart, a very large share of that nervous irritability, which is not unfrequently the characteristic of the distinguished actor; and on her being encored in the song of "Heigho," in the character of Cicely, in the excitement of the moment, slapped her face on her leaving the stage, as he conceived that her success would deprive him of an encore for his song in the next scene. He immediately afterwards felt the rudeness of his conduct, and begging her pardon, called himself a brute; wondered how he could have done it, and promised her his assistance in her professional career. He never forgot this ebullition of temper, and endeavoured to compensate for it by his kindness and attention in all their subsequent professional intercourse.

Mr. Thomas Dibdin having seen Miss Copeland, while in Kent, as Bianca, in *Fazio*, offered her an engagement at the Surrey Theatre, to sustain a principal character in his adaptation of Sir Walter Scott's novel, *The Heart of Midlothian*. It has always been supposed that she was the original Madge Wildfire in that interesting drama, but this is not the fact; the late Mrs. Egerton was its first representative, and created so great a sensation in it, that the young actress accepted the part with considerable reluctance, but her personation was crowned with an unequivocal and brilliant success; her extreme youth imparted a new charm to it, which was also increased by the effective manner in which she sung the snatches of old Scottish song, with which the part abounds. So great was the admiration elicited by her performance, that the drama was played during the greater part of two or three seasons; and on one occasion she appeared in it at the desire of the late Duke of Kent, who, with the Duchess of Kent, the mother of her present Majesty, honoured her with their presence.

About this time Dibdin produced his extravaganza of *Harlequin Hoax, or a Pantomime Postponed*, in which a scene was introduced to afford Miss Copeland an opportunity of giving an imitation, for which she had become celebrated, of a French ballad singer, in the popular *chanson* "*Portrait Charmant*." It was so successful that Mr. Buckstone introduced it into the monologue of *Widow Wiggins*, which he wrote expressly for her, and the melody became at last almost identified with the subject of the present memoir, and which is now referred to merely for the sake of the fact, as other actresses have recently adopted this imitation, and acquired some degree of reputation in giving it, even in the same theatre where the original was engaged, and whose varied and delightful talent had first bestowed upon it the attraction it afterwards possessed.

From the Surrey Theatre Miss Copeland was engaged by the late Mr. Elliston for Drury-Lane, where she made her appearance in the farce of *Maid or Wife*, afterwards known as the *Married Bachelor*; Elliston and Harley appearing with her as the baronet and his servant. About this time she entered into a matrimonial alliance with Mr. Fitzwilliam. A dispute with Mr. Elliston having caused her to relinquish her engagement at Drury-Lane, she, after appearing at several of the metropolitan theatres, during which time she added fresh honours to her then established reputation, entered into an engagement with Messrs. Terry and Yates at the Adelphi Theatre, and was the original Kate Plowden in *The Pilot*, and Louisa Lovetrick in *The Dead Shot*. To be a leading actress among such a company as the Adelphi possessed at that time, required talent of the highest order; few playgoers can forget the delight they experienced in witnessing the performances of that phalanx of dramatic talent, that cluster of stars whose combined radiance nightly drew crowded and enthusiastic audiences. Here she sang mock bravuras with glorious John Reeve, and played the leading comic characters with him, Terry, the elder Charles Mathews, Yates, and Buckstone. Here also she was the original representative of Bella in *The Wreck Ashore*, Rose in *Henriette*, Elisé in *Victorine*, and many other characters in that justly celebrated and intensely interesting series of dramas produced by Mr. Buckstone during this period.

On Mr. Benjamin Webster becoming lessee of the Haymarket Theatre, she entered into an engagement with him, and on its conclusion took her departure for America.

In the United States she was every where received with perfect enthusiasm; the rapidity of her changes of character and costume, and the truth and nature with which she delineated the various eccentric creations in her celebrated monologues of *Widow Wiggins*, and *The Belle of the Hotel*, astonished the Americans: they had never before seen anything of the kind attempted by an actress; and in every state of the Union wherever she appeared her attraction was immense, while the facility with which she accompanied her songs on the harp, the pianoforte, and the guitar; and the command she possessed over those instruments was the theme of universal praise and admiration. Her first appearance in New York was as Peggy in *The Country Girl*; that, and her personation of the six characters in *Widow Wiggins*, obtained for her a great and indeed enthusiastic reception—a reception always given by that warm-hearted and generous people to all who, while they seek, also deserve their favour.

The impression she made at New York secured her a welcome throughout America, and both in the north and south, and particularly at New Orleans, no English actress has ever been more attractive or successful. She was serenaded nightly, and showers of bouquets were given to her on every performance.

In the southern American theatres the galleries or upper boxes are set apart for coloured people only; one evening, after a pelting of bouquets from the white portion of the audience, she broke into a pathetic negro song; to a very beautiful air: the delight of the negro part of the audience was unbounded; and one woman, in her enthusiasm, threw down an enormous bouquet of that beautiful flower, the magnolia, which, in the southern states of America, is found in great perfection. The size of the offering, combined with the height from which it descended, was such, that the intended compliment became rather an equivocal one, as it struck the object of admiration so violently, as to throw her off her equilibrium, and it was with great difficulty that Mrs. Fitzwilliam preserved herself from falling. At New Orleans, her engagements were so frequently renewed, that, on her first visit, she performed there fifty nights. Mr. Buckstone, who, at the same time, was acting at another theatre in New Orleans, here joined her, and added greatly to the attraction. They visited the Havannah in company during the carnival; and although only going there for a pleasure trip, they found their reputation had travelled with them, and they were prevailed upon to appear at the Diorama, a theatre near the Paseo, where their popular duo-drama of *The Snapping Turtles*, *Widow Wiggins*, *Foreign Airs and Native Graces*, the latter written for Mrs. Fitzwilliam's great imitative talent by the veteran Moncrief, elicited from the Spaniards roars of laughter, as loud and as genial as were ever given by an English audience; and on the walls of the old city appeared bills, announcing the great success of Madama Fitzwilliam and Y el Senor Buckstone. They were the first English comedians who ever gave a decided dramatic representation at the Havannah. Mrs. Fitzwilliam made two visits to the United States, both of which were highly gratifying and remunerative. On her last return, after having fulfilled several most successful provincial engagements, she returned to the metropolis, and appeared in Mr. Buckstone's romantic drama of *The Green Bushes*, in which her unrivalled performance of Nelly O'Neil is still fresh in the memory of our readers; while in the same author's *Flowers of the Forest*, her powerful delineation of Starlight Bess, the gipsy girl, has never been surpassed.





MRS FITZWILLIAM AS MRS PAGE.

"What! have I scap'd love-letters in the holiday time of my beauty and am I now a subject for them? Let me see."

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

Act 2, Sc 1

*Engraved by J. Storratt from a Daguerreotype by Mayall.*

She is now fulfilling an engagement at the Haymarket, the true home of comedy, where, as if in evidence of the admitted axiom, that the great *artiste* has always something further to learn—for life itself is too short for the attainment of perfect excellence in the dramatic art—her reputation is, if possible, still increasing, and justly so: for where, on the modern stage, is to be found two characters so touchingly natural—so full of mingled humour and pathos—so true, in every light and shade of our varied nature, as her personation of Nan, in *Good for Nothing*, and Margery, in *The Rough Diamond*. The former is a creation of great originality, utterly unlike the mass of characters constantly appearing on our stage. It is no abstraction—no thing of stilts and muslin, but a veritable living, breathing creature, whose good qualities are obscured by a pernicious education. A young girl, who would have been an ornament to her sex under proper training, permitted to run loose in the streets, becomes rude, mischievous, dirty, and seemingly, in all respects, good for nothing. And thus she remains, until her heart is touched by kindness; then, for the first time in her life, she begins seriously to reflect; and the result of that reflection is her transformation into a clean, cheerful, and industrious girl. A fine lesson is taught in this little drama: the course that is successful with one, may be so with a thousand. If gentleness were the universal teacher, we should not hear much of punishments. Mrs. Fitzwilliam's appearance in this part—very truthfully represented in the engraving from the daguerreotype, which accompanies this memoir—was a wonderful instance of her skill in the assumption of character: it was the most perfect disguise that can be imagined; the actress had disappeared, and it was the poor, rough-headed, neglected orphan that stood before us. But her better feelings once awakened, how womanly is this poor, rude creature: what a warm affection resides in her rough nature for her humble lover; and how touchingly was all this represented by Mrs. Fitzwilliam. And in the young country-girl, Margery, who marries far above her station in life, but neither forgets her old habits or her old friends, and gives her awkward country cousin, Joe, who is going to service, a zealous welcome in her new and elegant mansion, there is a sincerity and heartiness that is quite delightful.

We never see her play such characters but we love humanity better, that it possesses such rude, uncultivated instances of simple nobility and affectionate kindness. In the classic drama, her recent excellent performance of Dorine, in Molière's *Tartuffe*, at the Haymarket Theatre, proves her to be a complete mistress of her art. The great charm of her acting is its womanly character; tender solicitude and unrestrained sincerity seem to radiate from her: not only are her impersonations natural, but they are chiefly transcripts of nature in its most amiable and attractive garb. There is a sweetness in the clear, joyous tones of her voice, whether speaking or singing, which at once captivates the senses, goes to the heart, and there awakes our most generous and affectionate emotions. Notwithstanding this sweetness of manner, which might seem to imply a similarity of feature in many of her representations, her versatility, or rather comprehensiveness of talent is extraordinary. Her genius is of a Protean cast. The old woman, trembling on the verge of imbecile decrepitude—the young hoyden, just bursting into womanhood—the frolicksome schoolboy—the wild country rustic, “warbling her native wood-notes,” and the accomplished or coquettish *prima donna*—the Irish lady, or the Irish peasant—these, and a thousand varieties of them, *live* in her charming and delightful representations. The late Mr. Elliston pronounced her to be the best Lady Teazle he had ever acted with. It is a popular error to suppose that character a high-bred London lady: she is a simple country girl just before her marriage with Sir Peter, and in her assumption of the fine lady, her original rusticity should occasionally appear through her fashionable attire and her constrained behaviour. This feature Mrs. Fitzwilliam rendered pleasingly apparent. Her Lady Teazle retained the natural glow of country beauty, and the cheerfulness of a young, untainted heart, as yet but touched, not contaminated, by the *blaze* and vicious society which surrounded her.

Mrs. Fitzwilliam's singing, also, is touchingly sweet and exquisitely correct, and possesses one great and uncommon excellence—the auditor can hear every word she utters. This peculiarity also attaches to her acting. She has reached that perfection which enables the great *artiste* effectually to conceal all art; so that while her elocution is faultless, her delivery appears entirely unguided and impulsive. A child of nature, while we listen to her, the measured cadences and artificialities of the stage are forgotten, and we seem in actual communion with the ideal of the dramatist.

In private life she is beloved by those immediately around her for her amiable and kindly qualities, and esteemed by all who have, even though remotely, had the pleasure of associating with her. She has a son and a daughter: the latter is now at the Adelphi Theatre, where she has established herself a favourite with the audience; and the former has given abundant promise of becoming one of our best English musical composers, as some of his productions at Saint Martin's Hall, at the concerts given by Mr. Hullah, and a *Stabat Mater*, performed with great success at the Hanover Square Rooms, and written by him while in his minority, have sufficiently testified. One of the first musical critics of the day declares him to be the most rising English composer now appearing on the musical horizon.

H. T.



## MR. JOHN BALDWIN BUCKSTONE.

THIS highly popular and deservedly favourite comedian is descended from an ancient country family, who have always spelt their name in the same way; and are not in any degree allied to the far more numerous families of the name of Buxton throughout the kingdom.

He was born not very far from the city of London in the September of 1802, and having received a liberal education, was placed in the legal profession, which not possessing many charms for a young and romantic mind, disposed rather to the elegancies of literature than to the stern and laborious studies of the law, he at the age of nineteen abandoned all hope of the woolsack, and, embracing the stage, made his first appearance as an actor at the little town of Oakingham, in Berkshire. Like most of our distinguished comedians, he first paid his addresses to the tragic muse, and was engaged for the juvenile tragedy and walking gentlemen; but the comic performer of the company being one night absent, Mr. Buckstone was requested by the management of this Theatre *Rural* to play the part of the drunken servant Gabriel in *The Children of the Wood* at half-an-hour's notice; in which performance we presume he was so far successful, notwithstanding the extreme brevity of the time allowed him for preparation, as to give decisive indications that his histrionic talent lay in the delineation of low comedy characters, for he retained that line of business to the conclusion of his stay in this humble temple of the drama.

Previously to his forsaking the desk he had written two five-act tragedies, and a comedy, also in five acts, and in blank verse, which, boyish productions as they were, were so far meritorious that the late Mr. Elliston, then manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, expressed a very high opinion of the latter, and greatly gratified the author, then but eighteen years of age, by sending for him to his room in the theatre, and reading selections from the manuscript; and although the comedy was not represented, it was returned to the young author with expressions of encouragement, and a desire that he should continue his efforts as a writer of legitimate comedy.

At the close of his Oakingham attempt he returned home, being earnestly persuaded by his friends to abandon all idea of the stage, and resume the study of the profession for which he was originally intended; this he admitted himself willing to do if they would at once enter him in one of the inns of court; but fortunately for the lovers of true comedy and hearty mirth, they delayed doing so from time to time until an incident occurred which at once revived the dying embers of his histrionic ambition.

The mother of a stage-struck acquaintance having left a small fortune to her son, the latter became the lessee of the Faversham, Hastings, and Folkstone theatres, previously the property of Mr. Dowton; for these theatres Mr. Buckstone was engaged by his friend; he re-entered the profession, and for three years experienced all the vicissitudes, hopes and fears, trials and triumphs of a country actor's life.

When the late Edmund Kean was in the zenith of his popularity, Mr. Buckstone was at Hastings. One fine morning, he ascended a beautiful spot, overlooking the sea, for the purpose of studying a part for the evening's performance. While reposing on the grass, he noticed, walking to and fro, a gentleman, dressed in white tight pantaloons, Hessian boots, and blue coat, with metal buttons, who, also, was deeply intent on a book. The stranger gradually approached him; and, glancing over his shoulder, exclaimed—"What are you doing?—studying?" "Yes, sir." "Are you up?" On hearing this technical phrase for being perfect, the comedian closely regarded his questioner. There was no mistaking the dark, piercing eyes, and the fine intellectual countenance of Edmund Kean. "No, sir; I wish I was up," replied Mr. Buckstone. "And so do I, too," continued the tragedian; "for I am here for the purpose of studying a new part—look at the length of it." On parting, Mr. Buckstone received an invitation to Mr. Kean's cottage, who behaved in the most liberal manner to the young country actor; and, in after years, when the latter was a rising comedian at the Adelphi Theatre, Edmund Kean frequently visited that house, to witness the performances and dramas of his fellow-student of the "Windmill Hill."

Having while at home become acquainted with Mr. Watkins Burroughs, that gentleman, when he succeeded Mr. T. Dibdin in the management of the Surrey Theatre, entered into an engagement with Mr. Buckstone, who accordingly made his first bow to a metropolitan audience at that house, in the character of Peter Smink, in a little piece called *The Armistice*, written by Mr. Howard Payne. His unequivocal success procured him several other engagements at the transpontine theatres, during which time he wrote his early but very touching and beautiful drama of *Luke the Labourer*, which will doubtless continue to be a stock piece at our minor theatres as long as earnest and truthful pictures of the wrongs and vices of poverty awaken the sympathy of the kindly bosom. Having attracted the notice of the late Mr. Daniel Terry, then one of the managers of the Adelphi Theatre, he made his first appearance at that house in his own character of Bobby Trot in the piece just mentioned, and soon became the intimate associate both of Mr. Terry, and of his co-manager Mr. Frederick Yates, and by the former of these gentlemen he was introduced to Sir Walter Scott on the occasion of the great novelist visiting the home of melodrama, a circumstance which is indicative of the estimation in which his talents as a comedian, even at this early period, were held both by the management and the public, and an event which no doubt had a favourable influence in fostering that untiring love of literature which has ever characterised him; for he always alludes, in a tone of enthusiasm, and with a warmth of pleasurable



MR. BUCKSTONE AS LAUNCELOT GOBBO.

"I cannot get a service, no! I have ne'er a tongue  
in my head. — Well, (*looking on his palm*), if any man  
in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to  
swear upon a book I shall have good fortune. Goto,  
here's a simple line of life! here's a small trifle of wives: "

MERCHANT OF VENICE. Act 2, Sc 2

Engraved by Hollis from a Daguerreotype by Mayall.





excitement, to his association at various periods of his professional life with many of the most brilliant and esteemed authors of the age.

While enjoying a career of prosperity at the Adelphi, Mr. Buckstone permitted no hour to pass unoccupied, and though actuated by a love for his profession, still found time to write several pieces for the Haymarket, which eventually led to his being engaged by Mr. Morris, as principal comedian of that theatre. Thus for some years he enjoyed a great and increasing reputation, performing at two of the most prosperous of our metropolitan theatres, the Adelphi in the winter, and the Haymarket in the summer. In 1837, on Mr. Benjamin Webster becoming lessee of the last establishment, and extending its season, he devoted himself entirely to that house, where he has ever since remained with two exceptions, once on the occasion of a visit to the United States, and also when he accepted an engagement at the Lyceum Theatre during the first season of the management of Madam Vestris. He also, during one of the vacations at the Haymarket Theatre, accepted an engagement at Drury-Lane, then under the management of Mr. Bunn, where he made a most successful *débüt* in the character of Wormwood in *The Lottery Ticket*, and sustained a round of comedy characters, till the temptation of an increased salary saw him again under the banner of his friend Benjamin Webster. At Drury-Lane he produced his pieces of *Popping the Question*, *Our Mary Anne*, *Snakes in the Grass*, *The Ice Witch*, and other productions, with his customary great success.

In boyhood Mr. Buckstone's constant companions were Mr. Douglas Jerrold, and the late lamented Laman Blanchard, and when Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton wrote the memoir of the latter, Mr. Buckstone was applied to, as Blanchard's oldest friend, to furnish materials for the biography; and to these associates of his early life does he attribute to a very large extent his literary bias and distinction; and often refers to the genial nature, delightful society, and firm friendship of his talented but ill-fated companion.

The public are so accustomed to regard Mr. Buckstone as an admirable comedian—they are so engrossed with, and delighted by, the actor, that his great merits as a dramatic author are not so well known and appreciated as they probably would be, had he never set his foot upon the stage; the world scarcely likes to admit that a man excels in more than one department of letters or art, and Mr. Buckstone's reputation as a dramatic author will shine with a brighter lustre when his exquisite impersonations and joyous hilarity are missed from the theatre by those whom they have so long delighted. Few, even among playgoers, are aware that he has written as many as about one hundred and fifty comedies, dramas, and farces, a very large number of which have become standard plays, and will remain so, long after the present generation have all passed away, and the mere ephemeral literature of to-day is forgotten.

Among his early productions were *Luke, the Labourer*, in which the late Mr. Terry, as the Labourer, and Mr. T. P. Cooke, as Philip, the sailor, displayed such rare excellence; after which came *John Street Adelphi*, written to display the peculiarities of the late Frederick Yates; *The Wreck Ashore* followed, and ran through two seasons, then came *Victorine*, and an adaptation from the German, entitled *The King of the Alps*; these were rapidly succeeded by *The Rake and his Pupil* (a three-act comedy), *The May Queen*, *Henriette the Forsaken*, *Isabelle, or Woman's Life*, *The Dream at Sea*, and other highly successful dramas. At this period the Adelphi was the most fashionable house in London, and it was no unusual thing for all the places to be booked at the Box-office a fortnight in advance of the performances; the admirable company then performing there (which included the names of Terry, Yates, T. P. Cooke, John Reeve, Buckstone, O. Smith, Hemming, Mrs. Yates, Mrs. Fitzwilliam, and Mrs. Honey,) were doubtless the chief cause of this high tide of popularity, but it is equally beyond doubt, that the highly interesting dramas of Mr. Buckstone were a coeval attraction of almost equal power. At this theatre he also produced his dramas of *The Reading of the Will*, a version of *Thirty Years of a Gambler's Life*, *Presumptive Evidence*, and *Poor Jack*, besides farces and burlesques innumerable, including *The Dead Shot*, *Damon and Pythias*, *Billy Taylor*, *Crimson Crimes*, or *the Blood Stained Bandit*, in which the late John Reeve appeared as a sanguinary captain of banditti, and O. Smith as an interesting lover, serenading his mistress in a parody on "Oh listen to the voice of love," sung and accompanied by himself on the flageolet. *The Christening*, *Bad Business*, or *a Meeting of Managers*, *The Lions of Mysore*, and all the Christmas pantomimes produced at that house for nine years. Previously to this he had produced many highly successful dramas which we have not space here to enumerate. His early plays at the Haymarket were, *The Happiest Day of my Life*, *A Husband at Sight*, *John Jones*, *Uncle John*, *Second Thoughts*, *Married Life*, *Single Life*, *Love and Murder*, *A Lesson for Ladies*, *The Scholar*, *Nicholas Flam*, *Rural Felicity*, *Weak Points*, *The Thimble Rig*, and *The Irish Lion*, in which poor Power made a great hit in the character of the Tailor, Mrs. Fitzwilliam admirably supporting him as the lion-hunting Mrs. Fizzig, and singing in an exquisite manner a medley of the Irish melodies. He has also recently produced there his three-act comedy of *Leap Year, or the Ladies' Privilege*, and the admirable comic dramas now continually being performed of *An Alarming Sacrifice*, *The Rough Diamond*, and *Good for Nothing*; and during the management of Madam Celeste at the Adelphi, he has written two dramas which have equalled, if not surpassed, in point of attraction, all his previous productions at that theatre. We need scarcely mention *The Green Bushes*, and *The Flowers of the Forest*, to prove this assertion to any modern playgoer. We have not enumerated one-half of the dramatic works of this interesting and industrious author; to record them all would occupy more space than we can here devote to the subject.

It is but an act of justice to a very delightful and highly interesting actress, to mention, that Mr. Buckstone's earliest patron as a dramatic author was Mrs. Fitzwilliam. One of his first efforts, entitled *Curiosity Cured*, was purchased by that lady at a period when he was altogether unknown to fame, and the young author and comedian was still struggling in the twilight of obscurity. Mrs. Fitzwilliam's judgment was equivalent to her kindness; for the piece was afterwards performed at Sadler's Wells, the Adelphi, and Drury Lane theatres with the greatest success. To that lady, also, was he indebted for many acts of kindness and encouragement, which laid the foundation of his subsequent progress in the public estimation, both as an actor and a dramatist.

As a comedian, Mr. Buckstone has been accused of being a mannerist, even by some of those who readily acknowledge his excellence in all other respects. But admitting this, to some extent, to be the case, we must not attribute too much value to the charge. The late Mr. James Kenney, the dramatist, frequently asserted, that every comedian ought to be a mannerist, provided the manner was good and original. Mr. Buckstone's originality cannot be questioned: his style is essentially his own; and must be admitted, even by the most lachrymose critic, to be not only highly natural and truthful, but overflowing with a native mirth and spontaneous humour which takes irresistible possession of his audience, and makes the gravest smile, and the cheerful roar. Every original mind has always an appearance of mannerism. No acute critic is ever deceived as to the style of any distinguished author or actor: mediocrity and insipidity alone is destitute of some peculiar idiosyncrasies to which the hypercritical may apply the term mannerism. But if this mode of criticism, or rather cavilling, be allowed to pass current, no distinguished actor that ever trod the stage shall escape its censure; for all have been mannerists; and the greatest, the most so.

There is so small an amount of sameness in Mr. Buckstone's representations, that it would be very difficult to say in what line of characters he chiefly excels. We have seen him in a vast round of parts, and always liked him best in that which he was then playing. What can be more opposite, in every respect, than his representation of that awkward lout, Cousin Joe, in his own drama of *The Rough Diamond?* and Mr. Creepmouse, the pompous army tailor, in Douglas Jerrold's comedy of *Retired from Business?* or Mr. Henry Dove, the footman, who had married his mistress, but could never forget his early duties, and always jumped up from his chair to answer the bell, until admonished by the severe glances of his offended spouse? and the love-sick and sentimentally-drunken gentleman, Mr. Sadgrove, in Parry's comedy of *A Cure for Love?* Again, his manner in the delineation of the grandiloquent John Duck, in Planche's drama of *The Jacobite*, and that of the ancient constable, Verges, "who is as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than he," may be truly asserted to be "wide as the poles asunder." The same may be said of his portraiture of Mr. Aminadab Sleek, the serious and selfish gentleman, who lifts up his voice against the pomps and vanities of the world, and indulges in an occasional groan at the moral and spiritual destitution of his neighbours: and the hilarious young heir to his uncle's property, Bob, in *An Alarming Sacrifice*: or what can be more apart from each other in manner than the representations of his original characters, the ferocious Mr. Box, in the famous farce of *Box and Cox*, and the timid Mr. Pinkey, the bashful bachelor, in his own comedy of *Single Life?* Indeed, a very imperfect list of characters, made highly popular by Mr. Buckstone, and utterly dissimilar in every feature, would lead us far beyond our limits.

In the standard plays so frequently performed at their legitimate home the Haymarket Theatre, Mr. Buckstone is always the acknowledged Tony Lumpkin, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Master Slender, Touchstone, Mawworm, Frank Oatland, Scrub, Sim, and nearly all the low comedy characters of the English drama. He has had the honour of appearing at the Court Theatricals at Windsor Castle, where his performance of Box, and of Simon Box, in Jerrold's *Housekeeper*, were commanded, and gave great satisfaction to the royal audience.

He is still in the enjoyment of a highly prosperous career, both as author and actor, and has, perhaps, scarcely yet reached the meridian of his reputation; for he has considerably added to his justly earned fame by some of his very latest assumptions. During the vacations at the Haymarket Theatre, he, in conjunction with Mrs. Fitzwilliam, usually make a provincial excursion; and, in the principal cities of the north, they are the most attractive stars the managers can secure.

Mr. Buckstone is one of the most industrious men in the profession; and, in addition to his duties as actor and author, is master and treasurer of that thriving and popular institution, the General Theatrical Fund. He contemplates, should he live to retire from the stage, (which, we trust, he will not do for very many years to come,) writing an autobiography, chiefly for the sake of presenting the public with recollections of his distinguished contemporaries, and giving some account of the London theatres since the year 1820, with descriptions of the performers, authors, poets, and critics with whom he has been associated.

In private life, Mr. Buckstone enjoys the friendship and esteem of his familiars, and the respect of every one.

H. T.





*From a Daguerreotype by Paine of Islington.*

*Anna Cora Mowatt*

## MRS. MOWATT.

POLITICAL contentions are a great fountain of injustice. It is a principle in strategy, that any manœuvre, however paltry, is allowable to win a battle, and in party warfare, any stigma that can depreciate an opponent. Hence it is only very lately that America has begun to receive a fair estimate from England. Admitting, as we were forced to do, her great material civilization, we have constantly denied that she had any pretensions to refinement, had any sympathy with art or poetry, or any special class they influenced. We have said this, though aware that it is more than fifty years ago she sent a native painter to become the president of our Academy, though in sculpture she claims the fame of a Power and a Greenhough, and in literature a host of names, from Franklin down to Longfellow, which have become as household words with us.

This injustice, however, is beginning to abate; and among the means of its extinction, next of course to increased intercourse, and the fraternal influences which must flow out of the great Industrial Exposition, we class such evidence as is afforded by the subject of this memoir, who embodies in her own person so many answers to these charges. A woman of cultivation, and no ordinary refinement, a poet and an artist in a most difficult profession, her case would have much weight were it only allowed to be exceptional; but convinced, on the contrary, that it rather presents to us a type of a large section of American society, we are proportionately gratified in acknowledging its significance. The story of Mrs. Mowatt's life is highly eventful and affecting, and after detailing its leading features, we shall proceed, as in other instances, to estimate her genius.

Mrs. Mowatt is the daughter of Samuel G. Ogden, Esq., a merchant of New York, and of Eliza Lewis, the grand-daughter of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Hence it will be seen that even in origin she is not wanting in distinction. She was born at Bourdeaux during a visit to that city, made by her parents we believe in the year 1824, though we are aware this is a point upon which we have no right to be precise—the birth of heroines and ancient heroes being always involved in mystery. She is one of a numerous family, not less than twelve sisters and six brothers, fourteen of whom are living; and, certainly, if we are allowed to take her as a type of such a group, we cannot but think that her parents deserve a medal from their country. It was in the bosom of this circle that her innate dramatic faculty received its first excitement. Amongst her home amusements was the performance of private plays, at the hands of her brothers and sisters, and her own *débüt* was at the age of five, when, arrayed in wig and gown, she was placed in a high chair, as one of the “grave and potent seignors,” in the trial scene of *Othello*. On her parents' return to New York, this taste for private theatricals was not abandoned by her family; and, though strange as the case may seem, that she never entered a theatre till within a twelvemonth of her marriage, her dramatic faculty at home became so conspicuous, that she grew to be both heroine and director of its amusements. Her's alone were the tasks of adaptation and production, and it is easy to surmise the range of reading it must have led to, and the sympathies it aroused. Of an ardent buoyant temperament, and an ideal cast of mind, we can conceive her favourite authors, and first desires to embody them.

It was during this interval that Mr. James Mowatt, a barrister of New York, and a man in prosperous circumstances, became acquainted with her family, and a frequent visitor to her house; and it would seem that his first impression of the gay impulsive child was of a nature that soon ripened into a sincere and deep attachment. His position and cultivation enabled him to interfere in, and direct her course of study, and the services thus rendered, and the intimacy induced, could scarcely fail of awaking a return of his own feelings. An engagement was the result, and in her fifteenth year she married him; a common age in America for the commencement of the term of womanhood. Removing to her husband's residence in the neighbourhood of New York, she was now surrounded with every luxury that his affluence could command, and passed several happy years, not merely in social ease, but in the enlargement of her artistic and intellectual pleasures. She applied to the study of various languages, as well as of music and of painting, and received the best instruction that the New World could afford. And as it will be supposed that all this culture in the case of a creative faculty could not fail of some result, its fruit was a poem in five cantos, published under a feigned name, which, however, was not so fortunate as to conciliate the critics, and which, together with another one that encountered the same fate, she was content to dismiss to the oblivion assigned to them.

Her health failing at this period, and showing symptoms of consumption, she was at once ordered to travel, and accordingly visited Europe in company with her husband, and passed a winter and spring in Paris; where, whilst partaking of its gaieties, she had still the self-control to proceed with a course of study; and it was here that she sat down to her first effort for the stage. It was a play in five acts, entitled *Gulzara, or the Persian Slave*, which, however, being intended in the first instance for private representation, was necessarily restricted both in its action and expression. It was performed on her return home by amateurs at her own residence, and its publication served to repay her for the fate of her first poetic efforts. It was in verse, and pronounced to be of a high dramatic order.

During this period, Mr. Mowatt had been seized with an affection of the eyes, which compelled him

to relinquish his profession, and soon after it was his misfortune to embark in some speculations, which proved signally disastrous. He lost nearly all his property, and at a moment when incapable of making an effort to regain it. This blow to his young wife, reared and settled in the lap of affluence, may be easily conceived. For the first time in her life she was awake to a sense of need, and to a necessity of labour; but a blow which, in the end, served to develop slumbering faculties, and to endow her with self-reliance, must be regarded as a blessing, however harsh in its first infliction. Mrs. Mowatt proved immediately her claim to her lost fortunes, by the energy and talent with which she resolved upon regaining them. Having often been called upon in private to give poetic recitations, her success on such occasions now suggested a resource to her—she resolved to offer them to the public in the shape of dramatic readings, and for the scene of her *débüt*, she wisely resolved on Boston, as the sphere of a more literary and cultivated public. This experiment, as it deserved to be, proved triumphantly successful, its talent not requiring the support of its necessity. It was repeated at New York, Philadelphia, and other cities, with scarcely less advantage. The effort, however, was arduous, and so overtasked her strength, as to result in an illness, that she was not free from for some years.

Mrs. Mowatt now exhibited a new phase in her career. Her husband partly regaining his health, had embarked in business as a publisher, and it was obvious that she had talents that could materially assist him. He proposed a series of works, both original and adapted, and in respect to their production, she had proved that her own powers were almost as various as his scheme. Her ready acquiescence, notwithstanding her weak health, and resolve, by every effort, to re-establish his broken fortunes, was another instance of her devotion, and disregard of self, not less honourable to her heart, than the genius it inspired. She accordingly set to work, and in a short space of time poured forth every variety of contribution he required;—sketches, tales and poetry, domestic guide books, and translations from lives of Goethe and Madame D'Arblay, down to books on crochet-work and knitting; from German criticism and fiction down to etiquette and cookery; from the poetic to the practical; from the antique down to the daily; her pen ran the round of a publisher's demands, and yielded various results, that were both popular and profitable. These efforts were not concluded without her rising in self-defence into original compositions, and accordingly, she now produced her first novel, under the title of *The Fortune Hunter*, which was given to the world as the work of Mrs. Helen Berkley. This tale was very successful, and circulated largely, and was followed by another, entitled *Evelyn*, which was even more remunerative, both in fame and receipt, ten thousand copies being sold of its first edition only.

Sad to say, all these exertions, successful as they were, and tasking as they did her mind and spirit to the utmost, were still unequal to their end. Her husband's speculation failed, and swept off, in its ruin, the last remnant of his property; whilst to complete his prostration, his malady returned, and again rendered him incapable of repairing his misfortunes. Thus another, and stronger call was made on the powers of his best friend; again was she required, by her own unaided efforts, to rescue both from destitution, and the spirit with which she responded, fully merited the success that at length permanently repaid her. Mrs. Mowatt was now about to pass into a new sphere, to complete the circle of her capacity, by illustrating an art which as she was naturally formed for, all her previous experience had most likely served but to develop. Mrs. Mowatt became an actress; the heroine of refined comedy, and of young and romantic passion.

Having produced a new work for the stage, entitled *Fashion*, which had met with the best fortune, she was induced, three months afterwards, to try the experiment of her personal powers; and accordingly made her *débüt* in July, 1845, in that great favourite of modern audiences—the dreamy and capricious, but sore-tried and true Pauline—a character, perhaps, for whose grace, romance, and passion, she was more highly qualified than any representative it has ever had, save Helen Faucit. Need we say that her success was instantaneous and complete, and her future pursuit and fortunes were decided from that hour. From Pauline she rose into the grander heroines of Shakspeare, followed by those of Knowles and Sheridan; and, at every new embodiment, confirmed her first impression. After completing a most profitable engagement at New York, she made a tour of the Union, and received, in every city, the most flattering recognition of the verdict that had been pronounced on her. It was on her return to New York, and when about to proceed on a second circuit of the States, that she witnessed the acting of Mr. Davenport, and seeing it was of a character that harmonized greatly with her own, she induced her husband to make him an offer to accompany her on her tour, and sustain the heroes of her *repertoire*, in order to avoid the impaired effect and fatal incongruity which she had so often been exposed to in her professional associates. The policy of this engagement will be felt at once by any person who has ever witnessed her performances; their grace and delicacy being obviously at the mercy of any actor who chose to encounter them with either violence or coarseness. This arrangement, as we have said elsewhere, was productive of mutual benefit; and at length Mrs. Mowatt, in common with all Americans of any superior power, felt the ambition to visit England, and court the verdict of its first tribunal; and as Mr. Davenport partook her feeling, that course was resolved on. Previously, however, to her departure, she found time to make her last and best contribution to the drama, in the charming play of *Armand*, which was produced at New York in September, 1847, and met with a success equally signal and deserved. Into the merits of this production we have not space to enter; so must content ourselves with saying, that both in the conception of the heroine, and in the general treatment of the subject, she has evinced a dramatic and poetic capability that warrants us in believing her greatest triumphs are to come.







Her subsequent career has been told in that of Mr. Davenport. She made her *début* with him at Manchester, on reaching the English shores, and afterwards in London, at the Princess's Theatre, in the character of Julia, in *The Hunchback*; and it is needless to repeat the immediate and decisive impression she produced. From thence she passed to the Olympic Theatre, under the management of Mr. Spicer; and from thence to the Marylebone Theatre, where, in conjunction with Mr. Davenport, she became the sole attraction, during a season of great prosperity. She here appeared in some new characters, which did not abate from her reputation, and produced her play of *Armand*, which considerably enlarged it. She now added a creative, to her sympathetic claims, and gave to her powers an appropriate and graceful culmination. She next proceeded to the New Olympic Theatre, in conjunction with Mr. Davenport, where she became the heroine of several new plays, the *Ariadne* of Corneille, translated by Mr. Oxenford, being one of her most important, when a severe attack of illness, succeeding the closing of the theatre, compelled her for a considerable period to leave the stage.

Such is this lady's history; and we regret that our space limits us in endeavouring to estimate her claims. Mrs. Mowatt, like Mr. Davenport, has a serio-comic genius; but we think, upon the whole, more inclining to the latter. Nature has not adapted her for the higher walks of tragedy, nor even that of its youthful heroines, in denying her the force which their due expression calls for. She wants strength for Juliet's passion, or even Julia's, in *The Hunchback*; nor is her face of that marked character that could atone for this defect, by affording a reflex of the mind, whereon the throes and changes of a great passion could be pictured. It is essentially bright and cheerful—made up of rounded outlines, and gay, laughter-loving features, that, when forced into gloom or passion, become more painful than expressive. Thus, whilst she has a tenderness and pathos that render her Imogen and Viola scarcely equalled in our memory, there is such an entire adaptation of her whole person, look, and spirit, to the blander sphere of comedy, that we cannot but feel it is her true one. It is marked by an enjoyment that shows at once it is most natural to her, however her tears and gentleness may charm us to the contrary. But her comedy has its distinction—we think it peculiarly Shaksperian, owing to that thrill of poetic feeling which winds through all its passages. That mixed exposition of the ideal and the true, which stamps all Shakspeare's writings as the profoundest insight into man, receives the happiest illustration in the genius of Mrs. Mowatt. Sensibility and mirth are ever neighbours to each other: and our fair artist well interprets what our best poet has so well divined. In the comedy of modern life she has unquestionable merit; but if it impress us the less forcibly, it is on account of its lower grade, which limits her expression. It is in Beatrice and Rosalind that she must be witnessed, to be estimated—equalled by some in art, and surpassed in force by many, she alone has that poetic fervour which imparts to them their truth, and makes our laughter ever ready to tremble into tears.

B. B.

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## MR. DAVENPORT.

WE have referred at length elsewhere to the causes that have retarded dramatic art in America.\* The use of the English tongue, and the possession in its literature of the grandest models of composition; and a delay in the art of acting may be assigned to the like obstacles, to the influx of English actors, the great favourites of their capital, who at once became their standards in their several fields of exposition. It was thus against no little prejudice, both English and American, that native genius had to struggle in the persons of Forest and Miss Cushman, of Hackett and Placide, of Mrs. Mowatt and Mr. Davenport, and it was with an ardour highly honourable, that not content with native homage, they each resolved upon encountering the higher test of a London public, and winning the gold mark of the capital of the Anglo-Saxon mind.

Among all the artists mentioned who partook this just ambition, and achieved its best results, none were tested more severely than the subject of this memoir, whose life we shall now briefly sketch, and then proceed to an analysis of his claims to public favour.

Mr. Davenport was born at Boston, the modern Athens of America, in 1816, and can boast of being descended from a true New England stock. His father was engaged in commerce, the chief employment of the north, and according to old usage, destined his son to follow his steps. But unluckily for him, that son was destined to illustrate another old example, that of an inherent faculty begetting a craving for its enjoyment. Already the boy at school had felt the stirrings of the actor—had plunged oceans deep in Shakspeare—had had dreams of his embodiment—had seen the benches of the school-room stretch into those of a shouting theatre, his lesson become a character, and his pedagogue an audience. Beautiful illusion, from which we must surmise that he was now and then awoken by the criticism of a cowskin.

\* See "Early Days of the American Stage," in *Tallis's Dramatic Magazine*.

In America, where labour has been hitherto so valuable, a youth enters the world betimes, and accordingly Mr. Davenport was made to fulfil his father's wishes soon after he left school. He was placed in a commercial house in Boston, and sentenced to learn the mysteries of invoices and ledgers. Of course this delay served only to augment his passion. In its hopes he found his solace, and most likely his great enjoyment in secret visits to the theatre. However, he was dutiful, and adhered to his pursuit for the space of several years, when deliverance at length came to him in rather an unexpected form—the panic. This sad event, which threw so many thousands into prison, took him, as he felt, out of one. The house failed that he was engaged in; he was of age, and he was free. "It is an ill wind," says the proverb, "which to nobody blows good," and ruin whom it might, this crisis favoured him. He now resolved that his next "engagement" should be entered into with a manager; that his future "call" should be to rehearsal, and the only "bills" he would look over, should be those of the performance. Alas for the second panic—about to ruffle the paternal hearthrug.

His wishes were soon gratified—a friend had taken the theatre at Providence, Rhode Island, and there he was enabled to make his *début* in the character of Welborn, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, the Sir Giles Overreach of the evening being Mr. Lucius Junius Booth. His success was so decided that he obtained at once a round of characters adapted to his youth and energy, and from thence he passed to better theatres at Boston and Philadelphia, where he at length acquired experience, and the art of stage expression, and rose from the mere tyro into the various and efficient actor. It was when he had gained this position in the Bowery Theatre, in New York, under the management of Mr. Hamblin, that Mr. Davenport attained to the turning point of his career, in encountering Mrs. Mowatt, then of established popularity, who induced her husband to make him an offer to accompany her professionally through the various cities of the Union, and ultimately to England. This arrangement was a source of mutual profit and distinction, and in November, 1847, they made their bow to a British public at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, in the play of *The Lady of Lyons*, and produced an impression which led to their immediate and successful visit to the metropolis. The manager of the Princess's Theatre was induced to offer them an engagement, and they sought the verdict of the great tribunal in Knowles's masterpiece, *The Hunchback*, when, it scarcely need be added, that their success was as decisive as it was in every way deserved.

Such is the simple story of Mr. Davenport's career. His subsequent fortunes are well known to the public. His support of the Marylebone Theatre, in conjunction with Mrs. Mowatt, and afterwards of the New Olympic up to the period of its close, during which intervals he sustained, with increasing reputation, not only his usual round of characters, ranging from Iago to Long Tom Coffin, and Wildrake to Virginius, but several originals in new plays, such as Mr. Spicer's *Lords of Ellingham*, and Mrs. Mowatt's play of *Armand*, until at length he completed both his experience and success by sustaining, as we have already said, a very formidable ordeal. He was engaged by Mr. Webster to play with Mr. Macready during the farewell performances of that last of great tragedians; and if the fact is undeniable, that at the time when public sympathy was converged on its departing favourite, and every last performance proved that he was departing in his prime—no lack of thought or fire, of force, physical or mental, being apparent in his efforts—if we say it is undeniable that Mr. Davenport was able to maintain his ground beside him, and even on occasions to divide the impressions of the night, we presume we have said enough in attestation of his merits.

We will now briefly give our estimate of his claims to public favour. If Mr. Forest and Mr. Hackett, have been recognised as the tragedian and comedian of America, Mr. Davenport stands between them, partaking the powers of both, if not to the extent of either. His is the tragi-comic genius, which holds the same place on the stage, that the romantic play does in the drama—that mixture of humour and passion which has always been a compound most agreeable to English feelings. That more plastic class of faculty which makes some sacrifice of depth, in order to increase its range of surface, and which passes with equal truth from a Benedick to a Romeo, and a Jaffier to a Faulconbridge, has been illustrated in our own time by the genius of Charles Kemble, and will soon have no exponent so accomplished as Mr. Davenport. Thus we see his great distinction—an extraordinary versatility, in which he has no rival, with the sole exception of James Wallack, and for which his physical endowments are quite commensurate with his mental. Nature has been most liberal in her outfit of this gentleman, and his taste and artistic feeling show his sense of the obligation. He has an open, well-marked countenance, expressive eyes, and pliant brows—a voice that is clear and flexible, and a well-formed, manly person. We shall now notice his defects, which we do with the more willingness, since they are so easily removed. His acting is at present characterized more by vigour than refinement—by attention to the leading features, than the general treatment of a character; and thus is wanting in repose, and in those finer shades of feeling, which constitute not only so much of truth, but of effect. This is the case with all young actors, whose first aim is to succeed, and whose evidence of success must be the applause that they elicit. But success being obtained, the point is, how to make it permanent. Mr. Davenport is in a position to solve this question without fear. Let him rely more upon his art and his own indisputable resources, in giving completeness to conception, rather than special force or colouring, and he will rise, we feel assured, to a height in his profession which will place him among the truest and most lasting of its ornaments.

B. B.





Wm. Prescott

## MR. WILLIAM CRESWICK.

LONDON is the birthplace of this gentleman, and on the 27th of December, 1813, he made his first appearance on the great stage of life. After a liberal education had been bestowed upon him, he was received by his father into his own counting-house, and designed for mercantile pursuits, but an early passion for the stage had taken complete possession of him, and to a dramatic aspirant the unromantic avocations of business possessed but little attraction; and although his duties were not entirely neglected during the day, still his evenings were devoted to the study of his favourite dramatic authors, and to private performances.

An actor, in his eyes, was a being of a superior order, almost a demigod, and a theatre a sacred place, whose mysteries were alone unveiled to the gifted and favoured few. When a boy, recognising Mr. Charles Kemble in the street, he was not content with simply running after him, but he reverently placed his feet in the prints made by the footsteps of the great actor. This trifling anecdote of itself proves Mr. Creswick's early devotion and enthusiasm for the histrionic art, and adds one more instance to the many that the child is but the father of the man, and that our tastes and ambitions are implanted within us from the beginning.

When Mr. Creswick had reached his seventeenth year his father died, the family party in some measure broke up, and our young aspirant at once, without having one theatrical friend or acquaintance, entered into his darling profession, by obtaining an engagement with Mr. Amherst, then manager of the East London Theatre, where he made his bow in 1831 as Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows*, Miss Fanny Clifton, now the celebrated Mrs. Stirling, playing Amelia Wilderheim. But he soon felt that this was not the best school for a young actor; he was aware that he had much both to learn and to unlearn, and therefore wisely determined to commence at the foot of the ladder, and to win his way gradually to distinction. With this view he joined a small company in Suffolk, and remained with it for nearly two years, working untiringly and willingly through all the drudgery of the profession, a labour which is absolutely necessary for every young aspirant, as there is no royal road to professional distinction.

From Suffolk Mr. Creswick went into Kent, where he also remained two years, and ran through a long list of secondary and leading characters, and during the latter part of this engagement he played with that charming actress Mrs. Nisbett, whose good opinion and favour he was fortunate enough to obtain; and at whose request he, six months afterwards, accepted a short engagement at the Queen's Theatre, then under her management, and distinguished himself in Mr. Douglas Jerrold's play of *The Schoolfellow*.

Again turning his attention to our provincial towns, he visited Oxford, Ryde, and Reading, and in the last mentioned place he first came fairly and prominently before the public by performing *Ion* in Judge Talfourd's tragedy with such power and effect as to elicit, not only the passing applause of the evening, but numerous letters of encouragement and congratulation from those who had witnessed his performance; amongst which was one from Miss Mitford, who expressed herself in the most flattering terms. Nor was this letter a solitary one, that delightful authoress continuing to address him, offering judicious remarks upon his acting, and giving him every hope that his future career would be a brilliant one. It was at this period that he felt for the first time an ambitious hope for the future, and that hope was strengthened considerably when, on the judges' being at Oxford, *Ion* was the play bespoken. Sir Thomas, then Serjeant Talfourd, was present at the representation, and was so greatly pleased with the young tragedian's delineation of the character, that he immediately sought his acquaintance, which has since ripened into friendship, and Mr. Creswick is still a frequent and welcome guest at the house of the liberal and learned judge.

In 1837 Mr. Creswick appeared at York, and performed for the first time *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Richard III.*, *Brutus*, *Coriolanus*, and other great great masterpieces of our national poet; everywhere he was heartily welcomed, applauded, and appreciated; and the critiques upon his performances were of the most gratifying and eulogistic nature.

In 1839 Mr. Creswick was married to Miss Paget, of the Olympic Theatre, a talented actress, and a highly accomplished lady, and in the same year he performed the passionate and romantic French peasant, *Claude Melnotte*, to Mrs. Nisbett's *Pauline*; he thus entered the field with the most distinguished and popular tragedians of the age, and the comparisons he elicited were by no means to his disadvantage. He also added greatly to his reputation by his assumption of *Joseph Surface* (one of his most finished performances), *Romeo*, *Young Dornon*, *Rob Roy*, *Benedick*, and *Richelieu*: this last character was perhaps the most able; his conception of the character of the crafty cardinal is purely original, and his delineation powerful and graphic; stern and dignified, yet at times playful, he makes *Richelieu* the lion as well as the fox.

Up to this period he had been rising rapidly in public estimation; he had studied hard; he loved, and was in earnest with his art, and probably no actor ever enjoyed a more widely spread provincial fame.

A tempting offer at length brought him to London, and in 1839, he appeared at the Lyceum Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Penley; great expectations of his metropolitan distinction

were entertained by his admirers, but unfortunately the theatre closed within a week, and these expectations were, for a time at least, overthrown. The dramatic world was, at this period, in an exceedingly depressed condition—Covent-Garden was without a tenant, and Drury-lane was devoted to musical entertainments; Mr. Creswick, therefore, followed the example of many of his brother actors, and departed for America, trusting for a better day when he should return.

In the States he was everywhere received with enthusiasm; and, after a sojourn of three years amongst our transatlantic neighbours, he returned home with brighter laurels, and a reputation attested by the concurrent eulogies of two great nations. He recommenced his histrionic career in his own country at Newcastle, and delighted his audiences by his personations of Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Shylock, Sir Giles Overreach, Claude Melnotte, Rob Roy, Lear, and King John. Of these varied assumptions, his Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth were most admired.

From Newcastle, Mr. Creswick went to Birmingham and Liverpool, appearing, with Miss Faucit, in *Richelieu*, *The Lady of Lyons*, and the leading Shaksperian characters, and then proceeded to Dublin, as a star, playing Spinola, in the tragedy of *Nina Sforza*; Mordaunt, in *The Patrician's Daughter*; also Shylock, Jaques, Othello, and Hamlet. His career in Dublin was honoured by universal and vehement applause, and he won "golden opinions" of all who saw him; and when he returned to Liverpool, to perform with Mr. Macready, he frequently divided the approbation of the house with that great actor, in Cassius, Macduff, and Edgar. In 1846, he performed Mordaunt, to Miss Faucit's Lady Mabel, and was greatly admired; while his Master Walter, in *The Hunchback*, was considered the most perfect on the stage. This is a difficult and peculiar part to portray, and not usually a favourite one with most tragedians; and Mr. Creswick's delineation of it is marked by great originality, and many expressive and highly characteristic features. In the latter part of the same year, he entered into an engagement with Messrs. Phelps and Greenwood, at Sadler's Wells Theatre, to play leading parts; but during the six months that he remained there, he appeared only in seven characters, namely—Hotspur, Romeo, Master Walter, Pierre, Ion, Pythius, and Cassius; and as it appeared that he would not be brought more prominently forward, he left that establishment, and again departed for the provinces, from whence he was summoned to appear, with Mrs. Butler, at the Princess's Theatre, on her return to the stage, and aided the effect of that lady's intellectual personifications by his performances of Beverley, Master Walter, St. Pierre, and the Stranger.

The following season, he concluded an engagement, for three years, for the Haymarket; but finding himself in the disagreeable predicament of being quietly shelved, he cancelled his engagement with Mr. Webster, and, quitting the Haymarket, immediately entered into partnership with Mr. Shepherd, the lessee of the Surrey Theatre, and, in conjunction with that gentleman, undertook to give a refining and improving tone to the general entertainments, and a taste for the classical drama in that locality. He entered upon his new and arduous duties with great energy and earnestness, and with a spirit not to be deterred by any surmountable obstacles, and a determination to educate the supporters of that theatre to a perfect appreciation of the most intellectual and exalted of the tragedies not only of our illustrious dead, but also of our living poets.

He has been censured for not pursuing that object with an undivided attention; but it should be remembered, that the locality is not the most favourable for the hazardous task he has undertaken; that just and intellectual taste is not a plant which is sown at night, and springs up in the morning; and that since his connection with the management of the Surrey, he has produced *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *Money*, *Richelieu*, *The Fatal Dowry*, *The Bridal*, and other kindred works, in a manner fitting for such brilliant emanations of genius; and that he has shown every desire to bring the modern dramatists before the public, having produced Marston's play of *Trevelyan*, Chorley's *Old Love and New Fortune*, and *Waltheof*, a tragedy, by a young and unknown author, besides others of considerable merit.

The great characteristics of Mr. Creswick's acting are an earnestness, and a clear, manly delineation of character, attending but little to the time-worn readings of the stage—indeed, altogether regardless of its traditions and conventionalities, he aims at what should be, rather than enquires what has been; and thus, in many points of conception and execution, he differs both from his contemporaries and his predecessors. He is not a mere reader or declaimer, but studies deeply and earnestly, and gives to every character he represents the impress of individuality; and as he is guided by a clear understanding, gifted with a delicate and ready perception of poetical beauty, and possessed by nature of a sympathy for the bard he illustrates, his conceptions are worthy of sedulous attention, although they may differ from those that have been received as nearly allied to perfection.

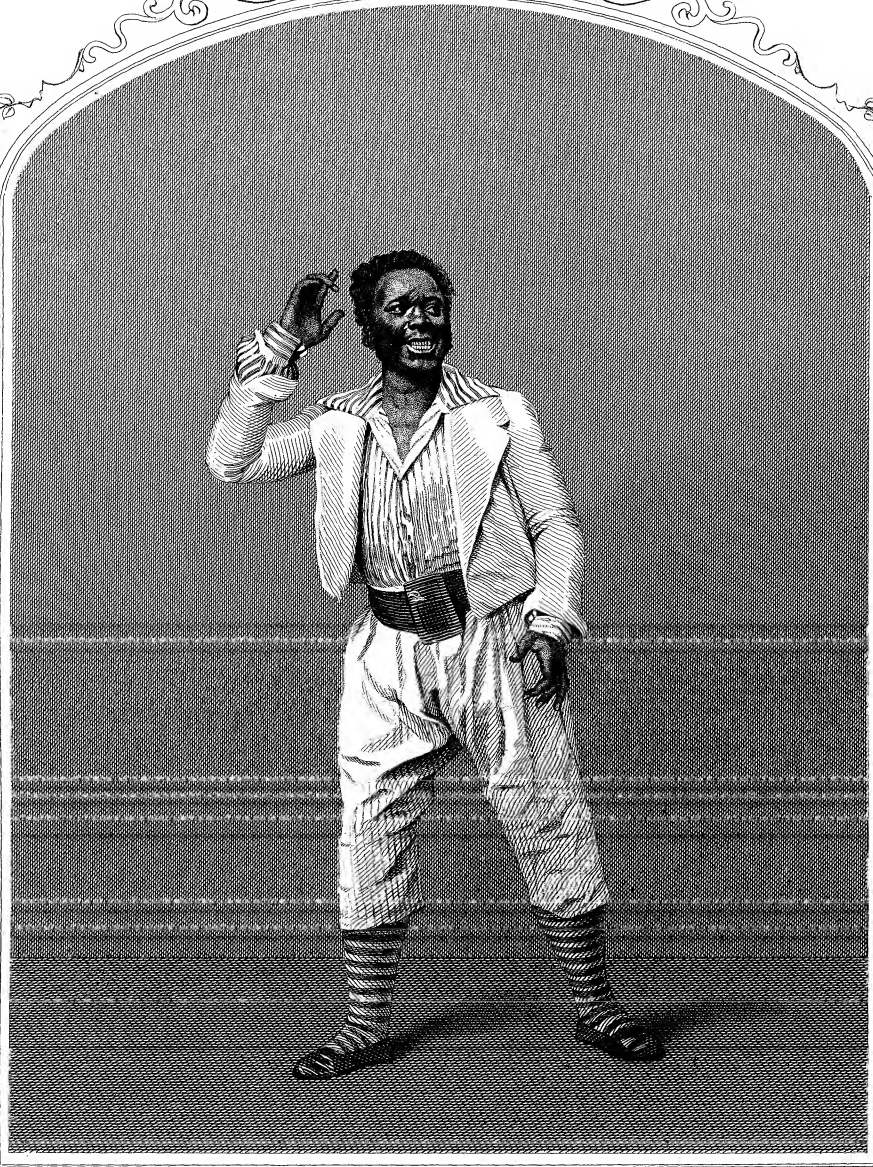
Genius is creative; it loves to be untrammelled, and to labour in freedom, governed only by such rules as are based on nature—"those rules of old, discovered, not devised;" and this freedom of action, and disregard of customs, for which no just reason can be given, is the surest evidence of power, and should be so esteemed and encouraged.

Mr. Creswick's voice is powerful and flexible; he is rather above the average height; his eye is full of meaning, and capable of great expression; his person dignified; and his action and deportment graceful. In private life, he is esteemed and respected by all who have the pleasure of associating with him; and few men enjoy more happiness in their domestic circles.

H. T.







MR. IRA ALDRIDGE as MUNGO.  
IN THE PADLOCK.

*MON.* Me get supper ready, and now me go to de cellar — But I say, Massa, ax de old man now, what good him watching do, him bolts, and him bars, him walls, and him padlocks.

*Act 2, Sc. 1*

*Engraved by J. Holtie from a Daguerreotype by P. A. & C. A. B. & C.*

JOSEPH TAYLOR & COMPANY, LONDON & NEW YORK.

## MR. IRA ALDRIDGE.

THIS gentleman, popularly known as the *African Roscius*, is a veritable negro; and we believe the only member of his race who ever adopted the stage as a profession. His ancestors were princes of the Fulah tribe, whose dominions were Senegal, on the banks of the river of that name, on the west coast of Africa. His grandfather appears to have been more enlightened than his subjects, for he proposed that prisoners taken in war should be exchanged, and not, as was the custom, sold for slaves; this humane desire, as it interfered with the perquisites of his chiefs, caused a revolt among them, in which the prince, together with his family, attendants, and connections, were savagely butchered.

One son only, then a boy, escaped this massacre; and, in conjunction with a missionary who had found his way to that rude and inhospitable tribe, fled to America. Here he was educated as a minister of the gospel, and was generally regarded as a man of remarkable talent. Desirous of establishing himself at the head of his tribe, and also of propagating amongst them the religion he had embraced, he returned to his native land, taking with him a young wife of his own colour, whom he had married in America. The result of his arrival in his own country was a civil war, in which his adherents were defeated, and he himself compelled to fly for his life. At this period Mr. Ira Aldridge was born, and until he was nine years old lived concealed with his parents in the neighbourhood of their foes, enduring every variety of hardship and vicissitudes. On the termination of this period of trial, the fugitive family found means to escape to America, where the father resumed his sacred functions as a minister of religion. He died at New York, greatly regretted by his coloured brethren, on the 27th of September, 1840.

The subject of the present memoir was intended by his father for the church, but this was not to be; his first visit to a theatre so dazzled and fascinated him that he resolved, at all hazards, to adopt the stage as his profession and means of life. Having studied the part of Rolla, in the play of *Pizarro*, he made his appearance in that character at a private theatre, where all his fellow performers were of his own sable complexion, and wore, as Shakspeare eloquently expresses it,—

“The shadowed livery of the burnished sun.”

The success he met in this boyish performance confirmed his histrionic desires. Having in some trivial capacity obtained the *entree* behind the scenes of the Chatham Theatre, New York, he hung nightly about the “wings,” and listened with delight to the various performers; whom he trusted, at some future time, to rival in the intellectual and intoxicating art which he so passionately loved.

But an abrupt termination was put to these evening pleasures; through the interest of Bishops Brenton and Milner, he was entered at Schenectady College, near New York, in order to prepare himself for the ministry; and here for a time he devoted himself to theological studies. He was eventually sent to Britain, and entered at the Glasgow University, where, under Professor Sandford, he obtained several premiums, and the medal for Latin composition.

After remaining there for about eighteen months, he abandoned his scholastic labours, and came to London, where, after great exertions, he obtained an appearance, in the year 1826, at the Royalty, an east-end theatre, now no longer standing. Othello was his opening character in this locality, where he was highly successful, and from which he went to the Cobourg, then a theatre of higher pretensions than at present, and performed Oroonoko, Gambia, Zarambo, &c., with great applause.

One evening, after representing Gambia, in *The Slave*, Mr. Aldridge was invited by a friend to a private box, to receive the congratulations of a party who had witnessed his performance; among the company was a young lady, who appeared to have entertained something more than an admiration for the dark actor, who stood alone in a land of strangers. She saw his “visage in his mind,” and within a brief period from that accidental introduction entered into a matrimonial alliance with him.

Mr. Aldridge's next engagement was at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, where he performed several leading characters, and then left that establishment for the Olympic.

He now determined to withdraw into the country, and there go through that course of study and practice which he very justly deemed essential to the acquirement of a sound metropolitan reputation. He therefore entered on a provincial tour, and acted in succession at Brighton, Chichester, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Exeter, &c.; in every town he visited, his reception was extremely flattering, and his reputation as a rising tragedian at last reached the capital.

For a length of time he had been unable to obtain an engagement at Dublin, the manager could not be induced by letter to accept the services of a man of colour. Mr. Aldridge, therefore, went there at his own expense, and had an interview with Mr. Calcraft, which terminated in an engagement for a limited period. Here he appeared as Othello, and created a great sensation; the inhabitants of Dublin were surprised and delighted, and the newspapers spoke in the highest terms of his great and remarkable talent. He subsequently ran through his list of favourite characters, viz., Zanga, Rolla, Gambia, Alhambra, Mungo, &c., in all of which he added to his rapidly increasing reputation.

During this period, Edmund Kean came to Dublin, and (having seen Mr. Aldridge play) with that good nature which was so conspicuous a part of his character, gave him a letter of recommendation

to the manager of the Bath Theatre, couched in very complimentary terms. At Belfast, Mr. Charles Kean played Iago to his Othello; and he Aboan, to that gentleman's Oroonoko. The testimonials and letters of congratulation which he received at this period would, of themselves, form a small volume; and among those who complimented and encouraged the "only actor of colour upon the stage," was the distinguished dramatist, Mr. Sheridan Knowles.

About this period a report was spread of his death: a paragraph went the round of the papers, stating, that while returning in his carriage from the seat of Colonel Powell, when within half-a-mile of Llandillo, one of the horses took fright at the blaze of light from the iron-works, while on the very brink of a precipice, over which the carriage swerved with its inmate, dragging down the horses and postilion. The footman, it was said, was providentially saved, as he was in the act of alighting to seize the horses' heads, when the carriage was precipitated over the cliff. The account, which was exceedingly circumstantial, and for this reason obtained general credit, concluded by stating that Mr. Aldridge, the postilion, and horses, were killed on the spot, and the carriage dashed to pieces. This story, if circulated by some illiberal opponent of Mr. Aldridge, as it was supposed to be, failed of its effect, for when the public became aware that it was a forgery, and that the African tragedian was still living, they went even in greater numbers to witness his performances.

After the fulfilment of several other provincial engagements, Mr. Aldridge received an offer from Mr. Laporte, at that time the lessee both of the Italian Opera House and of Covent-Garden Theatre. This he readily accepted, and made his appearance at the latter house on the 10th of April, 1833, in his favourite character of Othello. One of the morning papers spoke thus of his performance:—"We at once gladly express our unqualified delight at his delineation of this masterpiece of the divine Shakspeare. To attempt a minute description would be as superfluous as difficult: he succeeded in deeply affecting the feelings of his audience; and the representation all through was watched with an intense stillness, almost approaching to awe." At the fall of the curtain, he was vociferously called for, and enthusiastically applauded; indeed, nothing could have been more complete than his success. But there were circumstances against him: a portion of the public press were inimical to his dramatic pretensions, and met him—not with candid criticism, to which, however severe, no aspirant to histrionic fame can justly object—but with levity and ridicule—a kind of attack no one can refute, and which, though its effects are often fatally injurious both to interest and reputation, it has almost passed into a proverb that it is idle to resent. The legitimate drama was in an unusually depressed condition. Mr. Laporte, the lessee, became bankrupt, the theatre closed, and the company seceded to the Olympie.

He then played for a few evenings at the Surrey Theatre, and left the metropolis, to wait patiently a more favourable opportunity for an appearance in the great city. Though he had not met with the success which he both expected and deserved, still he had stood the test of a London audience, and had not failed; and his reputation and value were enhanced among country managers.

While performing at Manchester, in 1834, he received a highly complimentary note from that gifted and ill-fated vocalist, Madam Malibran, who stated, that never, in the course of her professional career, had she witnessed a more interesting and powerful performance. A similar compliment was paid to him by Lady Wrixon Beecher, late Miss O'Neill, who said—"During my professional, as well as private life, I never saw so correct a portraiture of Othello amidst the principal luminaries of my day."

In 1848, he accepted another engagement at the Surrey, and made his appearance there in the character of Zanga. Upon this occasion, the press was unanimous in its expression of unqualified approbation; encomiums of the loftiest character were lavishly bestowed upon him; and his engagement terminated with an offer to renew it: but it is on the Middlesex side of the river that he is desirous of again submitting himself to the judgment of the London playgoers; and we trust that, at no distant period, his wish will be gratified.

As both a tragic and a comic actor, Mr. Aldridge's talents are undeniable: he possesses every mental and physical requisite for both walks of the profession. In tragedy, he has a solemn intensity of style, bursting occasionally into a blaze of fierce invective, or passionate declamation; while the dark shades of his face become doubly sombre in their thoughtful aspect: a night-like gloom is spread over them, and an expression more terrible than paler lineaments can readily assume. In farce, he is exceedingly amusing—the ebony becomes polished—the coal emits sparks. His face is the faithful index of his mind; and as there is not a darker frown than his, there is not a broader grin. The ecstasy of his long, shrill note, in "Opposum up a gum-tree," can only be equalled by the agony of his cry of despair over the body of Desdemona.

A fugitive from his father-land, and an enthusiastic follower of an elegant and refining art, the African tragedian has made this country the land of his adoption; and we sincerely trust that no ungenerous prejudice against his colour or his race may be permitted to interfere with his professional progress, or to rob him of one leaf of that histrionic laurel which, we believe, he is destined to enjoy. Genius is not confined to any one race or country: it is of all complexions and of all climes; and its mission is uniformly beneficial or elevating to humanity. Be its recipient white or black, let none dare to despise it.





*Charles Keen*

*From a Daguerreotype by P. J. M. of Edinburgh.*

## MR. CHARLES KEAN.

MR. KEAN is a native of the sister kingdom, and was born at Waterford, on the 18th of January, 1811. His father, the celebrated Edmund Kean, then a performer of little note in that city, had married a member of the Cuffe family, long known and respected in those parts. The lady, whose name was Mary Chambers, had, from straitened circumstances, turned her thoughts to the stage, and first became known to her future husband at the Cheltenham theatre, where she was one of Mr. Beverley's company. They were married in 1808.

The subject of this notice was their second son. His elder brother died while a child. It need hardly be stated that the circumstances of Mr. and Mrs. Kean were far from affluent, but Kean seems greatly to have exerted himself to gain a respectable livelihood; not only sustaining the leading characters in tragedy, but those of pantomime also, and on the same night: a proof that his talent was already recognised, however inadequately it might be rewarded. Years before, his versatility was proved. A play-bill is still extant, in which he was announced to represent the blind man in *Pizarro*, and to sing "Four-and-twenty cobblers all of a row," in the course of the evening. Besides this industry on the stage, he gave lessons in fencing, dancing, and other exercises. These, as "teaching we learn," qualified him to appear to such advantage on the boards, that while performing to a wretched house, one of an audience of *three* persons in the boxes, at once decided that he would be an acquisition to the London theatre. It was Mr. Arnold, the dramatist, who that night invited Kean to breakfast with him on the following morning, when he immediately offered him an engagement at Drury-lane.

This was in 1814. He came to the metropolis—made a favourable impression in *Shylock*, and fairly took the town by storm in *Richard the Third*. Then came to the fortunate actor the full tide of prosperity. The idol of the public, wealth flowed in upon him, and nobles were proud of being called his patrons. Such a change it would be difficult for any son of Adam to sustain unmoved. Kean had the weakness to give his company to mean hangers-on, who estranged him to his family, and betrayed him into reprehensible excesses. In the melancholy sequel he lost the favour of those who had been his most fervent admirers; he became, temporarily, an object of public indignation; and finally, ruined and lost, he sunk to his grave worn out, when he ought to have been in the zenith of his fame.

It is necessary to give an outline of the father's extraordinary career, to explain the position of his son. Obligated to glance at the dark side of the picture, however reluctant in the case of such a man as Edmund Kean,

"To draw his failings from their dread abode,"

Candour demands it should be added that many traits of generosity furnish redeeming points in his character. He could visit with righteous indignation mean hypocrisy; and tenderly sympathise with misfortune. At Portsmouth, on one occasion, having entered a tavern with some friends, the landlord was offensively obsequious, and offered extravagant acknowledgments of the honour conferred on his house by the great actor of the day, Kean scornfully reminded him of the heartless insolence which he had met with from the same individual, some years before, when a poor stroller he had entered his house for half-a-pint of beer, and instantly quitted the place. Starring it at Brighton, the prices were doubled, and he performed to a crowded house; Kean was to receive half the proceeds. The manager, on the following morning, waited upon him with his share, when he nobly rejected it, saying, "I will not touch a farthing of it. My reason for refusing it is this—I know you have been unfortunate, and you have nine children, while I have but one."

From what we have stated, it will be seen that it was the lot of Mr. Charles Kean to be born in poverty; but when he first woke to consciousness, he was apparently the heir of fortune. He was sent to Eton School at the proper age, having previously been placed in a preparatory school, at Worplesdon in Surrey, and afterwards at Greenford, near Harrow.

The declining fortunes of the senior Kean could not long be concealed from Charles. His father and mother were separated; and, in the early part of 1827, he received a pressing letter from the latter, desiring him to come to her without loss of time. He obeyed the summons, and found her suffering from ill health, but more from anxiety on his account; Mr. Calcraft, a member of Parliament, and one of the Drury-lane managing committee, offered to procure him a cadetship in the East India Company's service, which his father wished him to accept, and indeed ordered him instantly to make preparations for his departure. The mother prayed him not to leave her. Parted from her husband, nearly bed-ridden, and having no relative in London, she could not bear the thought of being deprived of her only child. Charles was thus placed in a most trying situation. He could not obey one parent without distressing the other. His resolution was soon taken to reject the cadetship.

The circumstances of Edmund Kean were no longer in a flourishing state; the tide in his affairs was now turned; and he told his son that he must accept what Mr. Calcraft offered. He added, he would give him his outfit; and, that done, he must not look to him for any farther assistance. Charles was now disposed to close with the offer, if a proper allowance could be secured to his mother. Kean was not in



circumstances to do that, and thereupon the youth declined the appointment, and declared he would not leave England while his mother was alive. Such a decision gave great offence to his father, who overwhelmed Charles with bitter reproaches. What, he asked, would he do, if he should find himself discarded, and left wholly to his own resources? The young man replied: "In that case, I shall be obliged to go on the stage; and though I may probably never be a great actor, I shall at least be able to obtain a livelihood for my mother and myself, without being under an obligation to any one."

The impetuous senior smiled contemptuously, but expressed himself with great bitterness at the refractory, and, as he probably thought it, foolish conduct of the youth; and though the latter never forgot he was in the presence of his father, they parted with feelings remote from those which human beings whom nature has so closely connected ought to share. In the summer, when the vacation was at hand, he learned that his allowance was stopped, and that he was not to return to Eton. He sought his mother, whom he found in ill health, and exposed to all the ills of poverty. The income which she had, up to that period, received from her husband, had ceased; and mother and son had no resources to fall back upon.

It was at this period that the then manager of Drury-lane theatre, Mr. Stephen Price, from America, who had gained from the Thespian fraternity, in consideration of his economical advent, the *soubriquet* of *half* Price, quarrelled with Edmund Kean, who left the scene of his early triumphs to appear on the Covent-garden stage. The name of Kean, alone, was worth something; and he offered Charles an engagement for three years, at £10 a week; which, however, was to rise to £11 and £12, in the second and third years, if he should prove successful. After what has been stated, it need hardly be added that this overture was most acceptable.

On Monday, the 1st of October, 1827, Mr. Charles Kean first presented himself, on the boards of Drury-lane theatre, in the character of Norval. He was favourably received; but the enthusiastic approbation, which he sighed to obtain, was wanting. To be tolerated, to be languidly approved, could not satisfy him. He was impatient to know what the critics thought of him, but had the affliction to find that they were unfavourable. Such a result was almost heart-breaking; but, in that moment of bitter disappointment, he had the magnanimity to offer to relieve Price from the engagement which he had concluded. The American was too discerning, or too liberal, to part from his new performer; and he kindly, and wisely, counselled him to persevere. He did so; but he found the steep he had to climb to fame, rugged and wearisome. The public regarded him with coldness; the newspapers spoke of him contemptuously, or not at all; and he languished through the season. As Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows*, he first met his future wife, Miss Ellen Tree, who was the representative of Amelia Wildenham.

Drury-lane closed its doors for the season, and the young actor determined to try his fortune in the country. He obtained an engagement at Glasgow; and while there, he went to visit his father, who was living on an estate which he had purchased in the Isle of Bute. Charles met with more kindness than he could have hoped for, remembering under what circumstances they had parted. Mr. Kean consented to perform for the benefit of his son. On the 1st of October, the anniversary of the junior's appearance at Drury-lane, they acted together as Brutus and Titus, in Howard Payne's tragedy of *Brutus*. An applauding crowd attended, and the receipts amounted to nearly £300. Shortly afterwards Mr. Charles Kean returned to London, and in January, 1829, he appeared as Romeo to Miss Phillips's Juliet. Still he appeared to make little progress in gaining public favour; and when the season closed he withdrew to the provinces. He acted with his father in Dublin and Cork, and being offered an engagement by Mr. Morris at the Haymarket theatre, to play six nights at the close of the season, he appeared there as Romeo to Miss F. H. Kelley's Juliet. That character he performed twice, as he did that of Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows*. His fifth appearance was in Sir Edward Mortimer, a character in which John Kemble had failed; in which Elliston had succeeded, and in that, for the first time in his life, Mr. Charles Kean felt that he had succeeded—felt that he had at length been able to do justice to his conceptions—and the newspapers, least favourable before, now gave him the meed of their applause.

About this period he was offered an engagement of £20 per week, by a person named Aubrey, in a company which was to act at Amsterdam and the Hague. He had little cause to congratulate himself on this connexion, as his salary was never paid. Except a trifling advance, he received nothing. Aubrey seems to have been a wretched swindler, and having carried his dupes to Holland, he speedily decamped, leaving them to shift for themselves as they could, without funds, in a foreign country. A performance was got up for the benefit of the sufferers, at Amsterdam, which was aided by the present of a sum of money from the King of Holland. Having returned, *via* France, to England, Mr. Kean next resolved on visiting America. He obtained an engagement at the Park theatre, where, in September, 1830, he made his first appearance as Richard the Third. The elder Kean had been much admired on the American stage. "Like father like son," seems to have been the general feeling. Crowded houses testified their admiration of his talents, and wherever he appeared in the United States, his success was complete.

That his circumstances were improved by such good fortune may be surmised, but that which his friends thought of still greater importance, was, "the vast renown he had acquired"; which however did not greatly serve him when he next appeared in England. It was in January, 1833, that he returned; and, says a contemporary biographer, "as if to prepare a cool reception of him at home, in descending into the boat which was to convey him on shore, he fell overboard. Such was his anxiety to reach London and see his mother after an absence of more than two years, that he travelled right from Portsmouth in his wet clothes, but fortunately sustained no injury from this act of hasty imprudence."







MR. C. KEAN AS GLOSTER.  
RICHARD III.

GLO: How is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York?

*Act I, Sc. 1.*

*From the Original Painting by Reid in the possession of the Publishers*

By M. Laporte, who was now the manager of Covent-garden Theatre, Mr. Kean was offered an engagement at £30 per week. The engagement was concluded, but Mr. Kean made it an express condition that his first appearance should be in Sir Edward Mortimer. He had no great reason to applaud his determination, as, notwithstanding the impression he had formerly made in that character, he met with but an indifferent reception, and the newspapers again became unfavourable.

Charles Kean had not completed his engagement when Laporte concluded an agreement with Kean, senior, which brought him to Covent-garden Theatre. Circumstances to which allusion has already been made, had now reduced the great actor to a mere shadow of his former self. His memory had become defective, and though he had still some brilliant moments, it was painfully obvious that he could never again be what he was some years before. Laporte was, however, of opinion, that the appearance of father and son in the same play would prove an attraction of importance, and accordingly, it was determined that they should act the parts of Othello and Iago, in the tragedy of *Othello*. The day named for the performance was the 25th of March—a memorable date in theatrical history, when that brilliant light which had so long been the admiration of the public, was to be extinguished for ever—when Edmund Kean was again to appear on the boards—only to die. He opened the part of Othello, but could not complete his task. The dying actor was removed to Richmond. He lingered till the 15th of May, when he expired.

It is not necessary here to notice the remarks made by thoughtless writers on Mr. Charles Kean having omitted to purchase some of his father's valuables, when they were offered for sale. Had it been his duty to do so, it is probable that a valid reason could be given for the non-fulfilment of it, in the shape of a *poor excuse*. We proceed with his professional history. When Knowles's play of *The Wife*, came out, Mr. Charles Kean acted the part of Leonardo Gonzaga, and the drama ran for the remainder of the season. Mr. Kean was still dissatisfied with the result of his labours, and determined to leave London. Meeting one day with Mr. Dunn, the treasurer of the theatre, that gentleman offered him, on the part of Mr. Bunn, a benefit for his mother. The offer was proudly but gratefully declined; as, feeling that he could support his parent out of his own means, he disdained to suffer an appeal to charity on her behalf.

In 1833, Mr. Kean accepted an engagement to join an English company at Hamburg. The heroine of the company was Miss Ellen Tree, and an attachment arose between them which led to their future union. They did not long continue their professional exertions at Hamburg, which were abruptly closed by the authorities of the place, who held it to be their duty to guard against their own establishments being damaged by the attractive entertainments of foreigners. Returning to England, success attended him in the provinces. In 1837, at Edinburgh, a single engagement gave him nearly £1,000. Men of the greatest eminence in the learned professions attended his performances, and on visiting Waterford, his native city, he was honoured with a public dinner, at which a silver claret jug of £100 value was presented to him, bearing the following complimentary inscription:—"Presented to Charles Kean, Esq., as a token of esteem for his private character, and admiration of his talents, by a few friends in his native city of Waterford, June 28th, 1838."

When Mr. Macready had become manager of Covent Garden Theatre, in 1837, he wrote to Mr. Kean, who was in Ireland, expressing a wish for his assistance, and desiring to know his terms, which, if it were possible, he would gladly meet. In conclusion, he expressed a hope that he might be relieved from any apprehension of Mr. Kean's becoming an antagonist, should he decline enrolling himself as a co-operator. Mr. Kean replied in a letter, dated, "Cork, July 27th., 1837," declining for various reasons to accept an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre. To the latter part of the manager's letter he gave this frank reply:—"You express your confidence that my own disposition will so far suggest to me the professional importance of your present enterprise, as to assure you against my becoming an antagonist elsewhere, should I decline your offer to co-operate with yourself. You may indeed believe that I *could* not, neither *would* I, oppose myself to the interests of any establishment or any individual. But surely you could never suppose that my acceptance of an engagement at any time, with any manager of the other great theatre, would involve hostility to *you*. The interests of both the national theatres are alike important to the public. I should naturally consider my own advantage in connecting myself with either, consistently with my rank in the drama, and its welfare generally; and were I to assent to your view, I should necessarily shut myself out of a large sphere of action. I might deprive myself of those professional associations I most valued. I should, in fact, compromise my professional freedom and independence; and it does not belong to the proud eminence you have yourself attained, to narrow my efforts in working out my individual fame."

This correspondence led to no arrangement, but in the January following, Mr. Kean accepted an engagement offered to him by Mr. Bunn to act twenty nights, for which he was to have what Mr. Dunn had five years before, been persuaded neither he nor any one else would ever receive again, £50 a night. He made a new first appearance at Drury Lane Theatre on the 8th of January, 1838. Hamlet was the part in which he now chose to appear, and though some of his readings startled veteran critics, his success was complete. The pit rose in the third act to honour him with their loudest acclamations for his admirable performance of the closet scene. It was no packed or starving jury, that gave a sordid or corrupt verdict; but it was the unbought suffrages of the real public, that established his fame. Again the metropolitan critics proclaimed his merits were of a superior order. That patronage which is ever

ready to idolize success, was now most liberally extended to Mr. Kean; and what was better still, the renown he had acquired continued to fill the theatre. On the 30th of March he had the honour to receive, after a public dinner in the saloon of Drury Lane Theatre, a magnificent silver vase, valued at £200, which bore on its bright surface a record of its having been presented to him "by the admirers of his distinguished talents." On this interesting occasion, Lord Morpeth, now Earl of Carlisle, was to have presided, but public duties having unexpectedly detained him in the House of Commons, the Marquis of Clanricarde took the chair. There were present on this occasion, one hundred and fifty persons, including many gentlemen distinguished in the varied walks of literature. The merits of Mr. Kean were the subject of animated panegyric. He responded to the compliments he received in modest and appropriate terms. During this engagement he only assumed three characters—Hamlet, Richard III., and Sir Giles Overreach.

His way has since been through pleasant paths. Some opposition he has certainly encountered, but nothing that could materially retard his onward progress. In June, 1839, he took an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre under Mr. Webster, receiving there, as at Drury Lane, £50 a night, and a benefit. His attraction was so great that his engagement was extended beyond the number of nights originally contemplated. His task completed there, he again visited the United States, but in this instance he was less fortunate than before. He suffered from severe indisposition, his voice failed him, and he was in great danger of losing his life by an accident. At Boston, in December, 1839, during the performance of *Pizarro*, in which he sustained the character of Rolla, while standing on the wing, and about to commence the dying scene, the child which he has to bear to Cora being brought towards him he moved forward a step or two to receive it. The spot on which he had stood was immediately occupied by one of the soldiers who was also waiting to go on, when a heavy counter-weight fell from the machinery above, and killed the unfortunate supernumerary on the spot; his blood actually sprinkling the dress Mr. Kean wore as the Peruvian hero.

Suffering from an attack of bronchitis he found it necessary to relinquish and to refuse various engagements, and return to Europe. In June, 1840, he resumed his station at the Haymarket Theatre, when he personated Macbeth for the first time, and with such success that the tragedy was acted for fifteen nights. In the next season he sustained the character of Romeo to the Juliet of Miss Ellen Tree. It has already been mentioned that they had become more than mere acquaintances some years before. Circumstances had opposed their union, but these were now removed, and on the 29th of January, 1842, they were married at St. Thomas's church, Dublin, and appeared on the same evening as Aranza and Juliana in *The Honeymoon*. Their combined attraction is stated to have produced "in five performances in one week £1,000." In 1843 he took a new engagement at Drury Lane on the same terms as before; and in 1845, accompanied by Mrs. Kean, he for the third time repaired to America. Their exertions were astonishingly successful, and before the close of the first year, they had realized a very large sum. *The Wife's Secret*, a play written by Mr. G. Lovell, was greatly applauded. It had been purchased by Mr. Kean from the author for £400.

Returning from America, in 1847, they learned that their old friend and manager, Mr. Calcraft, of the Dublin theatre, was in difficulties. Mr. and Mrs. Kean kindly hastened to his relief, and performed for his benefit, as Mr. and Mrs. Oakley, in *The Jealous Wife*. The Earl of Clarendon was present on this occasion; and his lordship, on the following Saturday, commanded the play of *The Wonder*, in which they sustained the principal characters. Various engagements previously made having been disposed of, they, at the commencement of 1848, appeared at the Haymarket theatre, in Mr. Lovell's play of *The Wife's Secret*. It was performed there thirty-six nights. They were to have acted thirty nights, but the engagement was extended to sixty; and on the night of their benefit the Queen honoured the performance with her presence. Her Majesty's "special patronage" was farther extended to them by the appointment of Mr. Kean to manage the theatrical performances in Windsor Castle, at the opening of 1849. For his exertions on that occasion, he was presented with a diamond ring by her Majesty, and was honoured by his sovereign with a personal interview.

Shortly after this he lost his mother. The widow of Edmund Kean died on the 30th of March, 1849, at Keydell, near Horndean, in Hampshire, at a residence on a small estate which Mr. Kean had purchased in 1844. Her latter days, through the kind care and honourable exertions of her son, were passed in affluence and peace.

He had the honour to be commanded a second time to attend at Windsor, for the purpose of arranging a series of theatrical performances, in January, 1850. Her Majesty's intentions were interfered with by the death of Queen Adelaide; they were resumed, under his direction, in November last. Mr. and Mrs. Kean appeared at the Haymarket theatre in March; and the Queen a third time honoured their benefit with her presence, when they sustained the characters of Benedict and Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*. Recently Mr. Kean, in conjunction with Mr. Keeley, has come before the town in a new character, as manager of the Princess's theatre, where he has fully sustained the high reputation he had previously acquired.



THE LATE EDMUND KEAN,  
AS GLOSTER, IN RICHARD 3<sup>RD</sup>  
OLO: 'Take up the sword again or take up me'  
ACT 1. SC. 2.

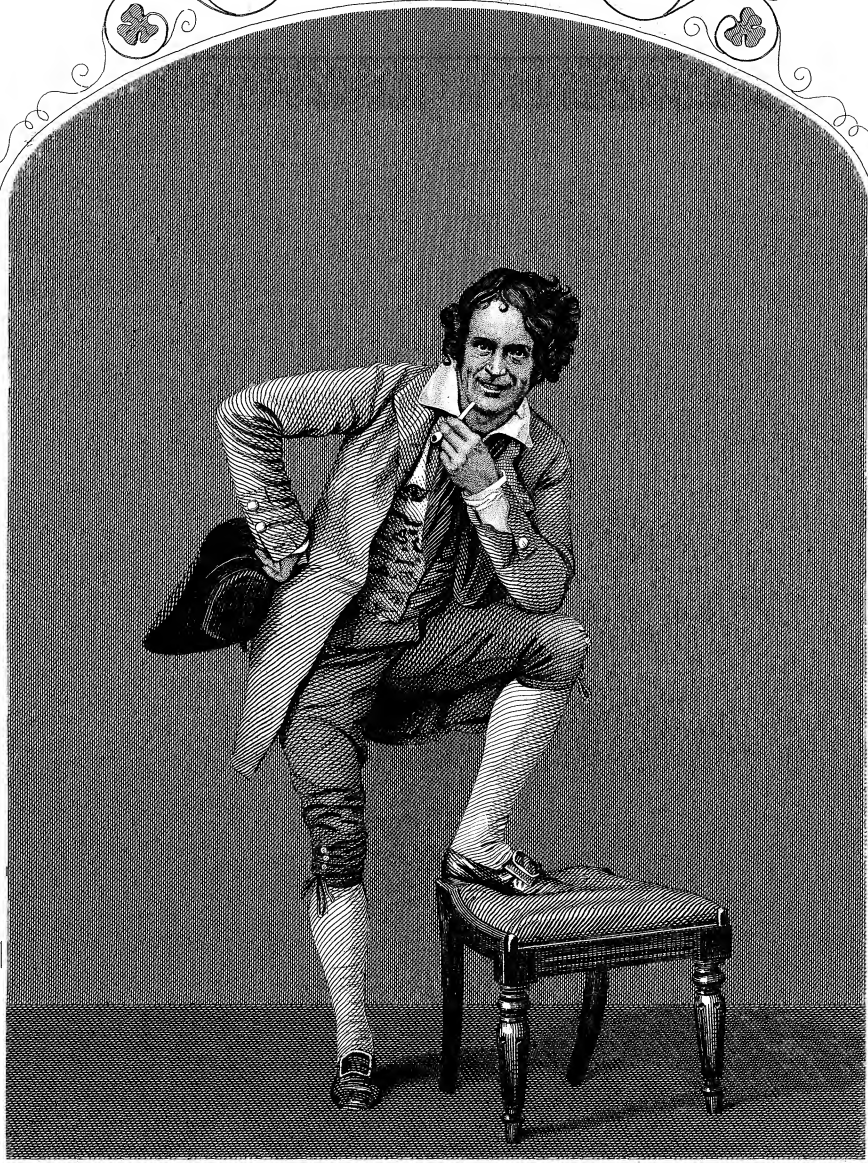
G. CLINT. A.R.A.

R. COOPER









MR. HUDSON AS RORY O'MORE.

"Tut, man; you dont know what devils them Irish foxes  
is Did you ever hear of the fox of Ballybothrum?"

*Act 3, Sc 2*

*Engraved by Hollis from a Daguerreotype by Mayall.  
for Tallis's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs & Anecdotes.*

## MR. JAMES HUDSON.

MR. HUDSON, who is now very justly acknowledged as the first representative of Irish character and eccentricities upon the boards, first drew breath in the "green island," the characteristics of whose children he so truthfully delineates. He was born in Aungier-street, Dublin, in the March of 1811. At a very early age, Mr. Hudson evinced a decided partiality to the fine arts, and while but in his tenth year, he was admitted as a student to the figure drawing compartment of the "Royal Dublin Society," and afterwards articulated to an historical and portrait painter, in his native city. But the actor, like the poet, must be born, not made; at least, this is always the case with the actor of genius; the drama claims its own, and no matter what career of distinction or affluence is opened to the gifted aspirant in other quarters, he obeys the call. "Seek not after thy fate," said the sage, "it is seeking after thee;" and that axiom was illustrated in the person of the subject of this memoir; an absorbing passion for the stage had seized him, and he was irresistibly attracted to the profession of which he was destined to become a distinguished ornament.

In the year 1830, when scarcely twenty years of age, he made his appearance at the Nottingham Theatre, starting in the profession after the fashion of most comedians, as the representative of the tragic emotions of our varied nature. He subsequently obtained engagements at Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and many smaller towns, experiencing the usual vicissitudes and difficulties of an actor's life.

After a probationary struggle of four years' duration, in which period he became, of course, thoroughly grounded in dramatic art, and obtained that easy grace, and knowledge of artistic effect, so indispensable to the finished actor, he made his first bow to an audience in his native city, in 1834, at the Hawkins-street Theatre. Here he displayed his versatility of talent, by the performance of juvenile tragedy, light comedy, and operatic parts for a space of nearly seven years more; slowly, but surely rising in public estimation, and climbing the steep and briary path which leads to Thespian fame.

On one of Mr. Macready's periodical visits to Dublin, he took particular notice of Mr. Hudson, and was so much pleased with the earnestness and variety of his performances, that he offered him an engagement at Drury-Lane Theatre, where he appeared as Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*, the same year that the *President* was lost, with the talented and ill-fated comedian, poor Power. But Mr. Hudson had not yet devoted himself to that branch of the profession in which he so peculiarly excels, and the first decided sensation which he created on the London boards, was in Planché's admirable extravaganza of *Fortunio*. When Mr. Macready produced Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, with scenic illustrations from the pencil of Stanfield, and in so perfect and exquisite a manner, that we almost despair of seeing it equalled, Mr. Hudson was the Damon of the piece, and obtained universal approbation, for the feeling and effective manner in which he sang the music allotted to him. On the termination of his first season with Mr. Macready, he paid a starring visit to his native city, and appeared with that distinguished tragedian as Icilius in Knowles's tragedy of *Virginus*, Ulric in *Werner*, &c., performing subsequently, on the same evening, as Jeremy Diddler, or in other equally broad and amusing farces. The warmth of his reception there, showed that they had not forgotten their old favourite.

In his third season at Drury-Lane he performed Richmond and Macduff to Mr. Charles Kean, when *Richard III.* and *Macbeth* were produced for that gentleman in a very costly and effective manner by Mr. Bunn. Transferring his services to the Haymarket Theatre, in 1845, he sustained the whole of the light comedy for three seasons, until the great success which he met with in *The Irish Post* induced him to turn his attention exclusively to the delineation of Hibernian characters. If even, after this brief chronicle of his histrionic career, evidence were wanted of the versatility, or rather comprehensiveness, of his dramatic talent, it may be found in the fact of his performing before so critical an audience as that usually assembled within the walls of the Haymarket, (a house not inappropriately known in the profession as "the grave of ambition,") the characters of Charles Surface and Dennis Brulgruddery on the same evening. At the close of the year 1847, he made a second starring trip to Dublin, and from the success he had met with in Rory O'More, having appeared in that character for sixty successive nights at the Adelphi Theatre, he selected it for his *début*. Hitherto he had only been known to his countrymen as a light comedian, and considerable curiosity was excited to witness his portraiture of the Irish peasant. A warm and most enthusiastic welcome greeted him on his first appearance from a house crowded to the ceiling, and his performances at once convinced them that the great reputation he had won in London as the representative of Irish character was eminently deserved. Speaking of his delineation of the Hibernian there—in the capital of Ireland—a Dublin critic says, "He did not make the character the buffoon long held to be the representative of a people whose racy spontaneity of humour has been sadly outraged from time immemorial, by those who cannot appreciate the genius of the Irish nation."

By this time his name had become favourably known in dramatic circles in America, and as he had had several offers from that country, he was at length induced (at the close of the year 1849) to cross



the Atlantic, and to try his fortunes in the United States. Here he made his first appearance at the Broadway Theatre, New York, as Paudeen O'Rafferty, in *Born to Good Luck*, and Tim Moore, in the well known laughable burletta of the *Irish Lion*. The Americans are a generous people, and always give a hearty welcome to genius, let it visit them in what form it will; to this truth Mr. Hudson can bear testimony, for his reception on this occasion was most enthusiastic, and he was called before the curtain to receive the congratulations of his audience on the conclusion of each of the pieces in which he appeared. The press also was highly complimentary, and we extract a few passages of a critique of his appearance from an American paper, because we think they contain a very excellent summary of his dramatic qualifications:—"Mr. Hudson possesses a good figure and handsome face, an artful eye, vivacious manner, and a rich Hibernian accent; and if the 'brogue' is not so thick as some actors deem it necessary to assume in order to portray the Irish character, it is rich, racy, and natural; and in his singing he gave convincing evidence of the sweet and melodious power of his voice. In Paudeen O'Rafferty he sung the 'Boys of Kilkenny,' and a new ballad, composed expressly for him by Blewitt, entitled 'Norah Dear,' in exquisite style, in both of which he was encored; but in the humorous medley which he sang in the *Irish Lion*, he drew down the most rapturous applause, as the plaintive cadence of his voice fell soothingly on the ear. In the portraiture of Irish character there is a certain degree of extravagance that must be tolerated to give it effect, and in no instance does Mr. Hudson, in his delineations, exceed the liberty taken by the author, but in every incident renders himself perfectly natural and amusing." Another American critic, in comparing him with the late Mr. Power, whom all will recollect with both pleasurable and painful feelings, says that he has hardly the rich brogue and the rollicking indifference of that distinguished comedian; but adds, "in appearance, intelligence, and familiarity with the stage, he is fully equal, and as a vocalist infinitely superior, giving all his songs with a sweetness and effect which can never fail to carry him through every part successfully." During a period of nearly twelve months that he remained in America his career was a constant reiteration of the success which attended him on his first appearance there; from north to south it was the same, and his time was passed as pleasantly and as profitably as he could desire.

On his return to England he re-opened at the Haymarket, in his original character of the Knight of Arva, in Mr. Bourcicault's drama of that name, with his customary success; but a very lucrative engagement having been offered to him by Messrs. Cramer and Beale, to join that interesting and popular vocalist, Madame Anna Thillon, in a new *Musical Entertainment*, he appeared with that lady at Willis's Rooms, and the experiment was immediately stamped with the most flattering and decisive success. In this entertainment, Mr. Hudson represented several characters, which were all delineated with remarkable skill and humour. He first appears as Mr. Jeremy Jinks, a professional diner-out, who interests the audience by a number of amusing anecdotes, and finally entertains them with a song; after which, as Mrs. Montmorency Brown, a lady of uncertain age, who indulges in a little amiable satire on the peculiarities of all her female acquaintances; then as Lord Fitzsappy, a noble young noodle, who devotes his vast energies to the invention of new patterns for waistcoats; and finally as Mr. Rackstraw, an inventive genius, in difficulties, to whom it has, however, never occurred, that the best method of getting his bread is by labouring honestly to obtain it. These representations were varied by a number of songs, both amusing and sentimental, and tended to exhibit the versatile character of Mr. Hudson's talents in a more prominent light than ever.

This entertainment, the dialogue of which is the joint production of Mr. Albert Smith and Mr. Charles Selby, has been since repeated in most of the principal provincial towns in England, and also in Dublin, Cork, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, with universal and unqualified favour.

On the conclusion of this provincial tour, Mr. Hudson made his appearance at the Adelphi on Easter Monday last, in a burlesque, entitled *O'Flannigan and the Fairies*, in which he represented a vivacious, rattling, hearty young Irish peasant, in an irresistibly amusing manner. Since then he has performed at the Haymarket, where he has, up to a late period, been delighting the public with his delineations of Irish character; but this part of his career is too fresh in the memory of his admirers to need recapitulation. He has now gone, for a second trip, among our transatlantic relations, and we doubt not will be received by them with the same generous enthusiasm which it was his good fortune to meet on a previous occasion.

Mr. Hudson has a tall and manly figure, a graceful deportment, a handsome and expressive countenance, and a mischievous, merry-looking eye. He also possesses a seemingly inexhaustible fund of good humour and animal spirits: a love of fun lurks in his countenance, as if repressed by an effort, and anxious to burst forth. A child of nature, he seems to have never heard or thought about acting in his life, but breaks out into wild effusions of mirth, as brilliant as they appear spontaneous; while his voice, which is clear, full-toned, and musical, is excellently adapted for illustrating the eccentricities of the singular and brilliant, but fugitive genius of his countrymen. Nature moulded him in one of her most liberal moods; and all that he owes to art, he has the art effectually to conceal. With poor Power fresh in our recollection, and his rich, sweet voice still haunting our memory, we gaze on his performances, and not only feel no void, but are delighted and enthralled by the actor before us. As a tragedian, Mr. Hudson is careful and intellectual; as a general comedian, he is natural, hearty, and mirthful; and as an Irishman, irresistible.

H. T.





MISS LAURA ADDISON as QUEEN MARY.  
IN  
SCHILLER'S HISTORICAL TRAGEDY OF MARY STUART.

"O! woe  
To the unhappy victim, when the tongue  
That frames the law shall execute the sentence."

Act I Sc 1.

Engraved by H. Ellis, from a Daguerreotype by Mayall.

### MISS LAURA ADDISON.

THE present age is remarkable for the number of those who, both in letters and the arts, have risen to honourable distinction by their own arduous and unaided exertions. There are some minds on which difficulties appear to produce no effect—obstacles, apparently insurmountable to the weak or timid, merely stimulate them to renewed exertions; they propose to themselves a certain end, and struggle perseveringly onward until they obtain it.

Of this class is the young lady whose memoir we are about to record. Her family were not only altogether unconnected with theatrical matters, but stedfastly opposed her desire to enter the profession. She never had any introduction, teacher, or patron; but went forth, alone and unaided, cherishing a lofty hope that time would shortly give her an opportunity of displaying that histrionic talent which she felt a proud consciousness that she possessed.

Her progress to distinction has been singularly rapid; for her first appearance dates no further back than the November of 1843, when she made her *début* at the Worcester Theatre, in the very difficult and trying character, for a novice, of Lady Townly, in *The Provoked Husband*: but she had prepared herself for the attempt by severe and laborious study, and the result was highly flattering and successful. This performance was followed by her assumption of Lady Macbeth, when she was at once hailed as a rising actress, and continued playing the leading characters in tragedy at Worcester until the termination of the season.

Her next engagement was at the Theatre Royal, Dunlop-street, Glasgow, where, for one entire season of nine months' duration, she sustained the juvenile and leading tragedy. During this period, Mr. Macready came to perform, for a few evenings, in Glasgow, and Miss Addison, representing Desdemona to his Othello, that distinguished actor was much struck by her performance, and sending for her to his own room, at the conclusion of the play, he said—"Miss Addison, I believe I may safely predict that you will become a distinguished actress." After this, he frequently corresponded with her, giving her both advice and encouragement; and it was ultimately through his influence and recommendation that she made her appearance in the metropolis.

From Glasgow she proceeded to Dublin, opening at the Theatre Royal as Pauline, in *The Lady of Lyons*, Mr. Forrest, the American tragedian, being the Melnotte of the evening. She was received in the most flattering and liberal manner, and greatly complimented and encouraged by the local press. After performing six weeks in the Irish capital, she received an invitation from Mr. Murray, to accept an engagement at the Adelphi Theatre, Edinburgh, for the summer season. This she deemed it advisable to close with, and having fulfilled her engagement there, proceeded to Glasgow, where she created a great sensation by her admirable and touching performance of Zara, the gipsy girl, in the drama of that name—a character which was originally played by Mrs. Nisbett, when that delightful and fascinating actress presided over the fortunes of the Queen's Theatre. Miss Addison played the character for about thirty nights, a run which is seldom obtained for any drama out of London.

On the termination of this engagement, she received a letter from her friend and patron, Mr. Macready, to come to London, and support him during a brief engagement which he had entered into at the Surrey Theatre during the September of 1846. She immediately came to London, and, on her arrival, discovered that from some misunderstanding other arrangements had been entered into, and that she was not engaged. Mr. Macready, much hurt at her disappointment, gave her a letter of recommendation to Mr. Phelps, the manager of the Sadler's Wells Theatre, who engaged her, at five guineas a-week, for the performance of leading tragedy. Her first appearance was to be in the character of Lady Mabel, in Westland Marston's tragedy of *The Patrician's Daughter*, and immediately on the conclusion of the rehearsal, Mr. Phelps, calling her into his private room, cancelled the engagement which he had already made with her, and, with a generosity not common among managers, offered her another, for two years, at the liberal salary of ten guineas a-week. This offer, which was, of course, gratefully accepted, requires no comment at our hands, it being the most solid, as well as most flattering acknowledgment which could have been paid to her histrionic talents. Her first performance of the character, on Wednesday, August 26th, 1846, was rewarded by a success equal to, if not beyond her most sanguine wishes. Her extremely youthful appearance disarmed criticism, and her passionate earnestness and intense feeling won the universal sympathy and approbation of the audience. The press, without exception, was loud in its commendation; and as *The Times* is very justly considered the most influential and powerful journal of the day, we extract the following paragraph from it, to show the general tone of the criticism which was bestowed upon her:—"She displays a depth of feeling, and has a store of passion—hearty, vehement, and strongly expressed, which are by no means common with the present generation of actors. The last act, in which Mabel dies, affords the grand opportunity; and here her delirious manner, and her bursts of intense feeling, are very remarkable."

Her next character was Pauline, in *The Lady of Lyons*, which she sustained with great truth and pathos. She then appeared as Juliet, Mr. Creswick sustaining Romeo, and Mr. Phelps, Mercutio. This

was the greatest triumph she had yet achieved: her representation of the young, loving girl, was so exquisitely affectionate and womanly—so fervid and devoted, that she held the attention of the audience as by some spell over their feelings: and in her soliloquy in the fourth act, where she takes the potion which is to produce her seeming death, she pictured the horrors of her situation with such wonderful power and effect, that an absolute storm of applause burst from the house, and the audience appeared perfectly frantic in its enthusiasm.

Isabella, in Shakspeare's comedy of *Measure for Measure*, was her next performance; hitherto she had been travelling in the beaten track, performing characters which had all been represented by the most popular, and established actresses of the day, characters which, in some instances, had been by common consent assigned to, and considered identified with them; but in Isabella she had no rival; the present generation of play-goers had not witnessed its performance; she was left to re-create the character, and she invested it with so much interest, and delineated it so effectively, that the most extravagant eulogies were passed upon her, and several metropolitan papers of great standing, declared her to have no equal on the stage.

Belvidera was her next part, and this was followed by her personation of Margaret Randolph, in Mr. White's play of *Feudal Times*, a character peculiarly fitted for her, and which will probably never have a more efficient representative. Her performance of Miranda in *The Tempest* also elicited many highly favourable critiques, and her Imogen in *Cymbeline* was much admired; in this, as in Juliet, her great capability of expressing womanly tenderness and affection won the sympathy of her audience, and the play ran for no less than thirty-seven nights.

Lady Macbeth was her next attempt, a character for which she, herself, has no partiality, but which, in our estimation, is one of her finest efforts; it was performed thirty nights. She then appeared successively as Mrs. Oakley, in *The Jealous Wife*; Lillian Saville, Mrs. Haller, Mrs. Beverley, Portia, in *The Merchant of Venice*, and concluded her engagement by the performance of Lady Mabel for her own benefit, on which occasion, bouquets were thrown to her in such profusion, as to convert the stage into a temporary flower-bed, and a handsome wreath was presented to her. The exceeding respectability of the audience, and the heartiness of their reception of her, evinced the high esteem in which this young lady is held, no less for her great professional abilities, than for her pure, unsullied reputation.

Her next engagement was at the Haymarket, where she appeared in the November of 1849, as Juliet, with the same success which had accompanied her first metropolitan appearance in that character, the play running for three weeks; she then represented Lady Mabel, repeating the performance for twelve successive evenings. Seceding for a short time from the metropolis, she went on a starring engagement for six nights to Edinburgh, where she opened in Juliet, and met with a very flattering and hearty reception, the inhabitants of the Scottish capital declaring, that she left them a promising actress, and returned a perfect artist. Coming back to the Haymarket, she reappeared as Desdemona, in the tragedy of *Othello*, which was produced with a novel and attractive cast; Mr. James Wallack performing the Moor, while Iago and Emilia were sustained by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean.

During Mr. Anderson's first season at Drury-Lane, Miss Addison accepted an engagement at that theatre, and appeared as Mrs. Haller in *The Stranger*, Mrs. Beverley in *The Gamester*, Bianca in *Fazio*, and Leonora, in Schiller's *Fiesco*, &c., but Mr. Anderson being unable to meet his engagements, she left that theatre for the provinces, and proceeded to Manchester, where she appeared at the Theatre Royal as Lady Macbeth, and having fulfilled a highly successful engagement there of three weeks' duration, she played as a star at several minor provincial towns, and reappeared at Glasgow in the winter of 1850, drawing crowded and enthusiastic audiences every evening of her performance.

After a lengthened absence from the metropolis, Miss Addison reappeared at the Haymarket, as Mariana, in Knowles' play of *The Wife*, on the 6th of March in the present year (1851), and met with a very hearty reception. She has since performed Emilia in *Othello*, Pauline, and Lady Macbeth; Mr. William J. Wallack, a tragedian of great merit from beyond the Atlantic, sustaining the leading male characters. It is needless to dwell upon a period so fresh in the recollection of our readers, and it will be sufficient to record, that she made her last appearance in this country on the 31st of July, in the character of Julia, in *The Hunchback*, previous to her departure for America, where she has proceeded to court the suffrages of our transatlantic neighbours.

We have thus recorded the chief incidents of Miss Addison's career, which has been by no means a chequered or romantic one; destitute of those vicissitudes which usually accompany the early life of the aspirant for dramatic honours, her's has been chiefly remarkable for a series of successes, which seldom fall even to the lot of genius, in its youth.

A few words only are requisite as to her talents as an actress; her style is entirely original; she has formed herself upon no great predecessor; her very faults are peculiar, and arise chiefly from an excessive energy, which sometimes hurries her beyond the control of judgment. Her conceptions are usually correct, never very erroneous, and always marked by a most intelligent appreciation of her author; there is much animation and womanly sensibility in her manner; her deportment is unrestrained and easy, and her attitudes natural and graceful. Her greatest deficiency is a want of physical power, but this, in moments of great earnestness, is more than compensated for by her grand and overpowering bursts of passion, when her eyes flash vivid meanings, every muscle and fibre seem to tremble with excitement, and her whole frame radiates the inspired thoughts of the poet.

H. T.





MR. B. WEBSTER AS TARTUFFE.

'The will of heaven be done in every thing'

Act 3

Engraved by T. G. from a Daguerreotype by M. G. S.

From the Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Nov. 1850 and Anecdotes

## MR. BENJAMIN WEBSTER.

MR. WEBSTER was born on the 3rd of September, in the year 1800, and is a thoroughbred Yorkshireman, his father being from Sheffield, and his mother from Leeds. He is well descended, his father being the representative, by the mother's side, of the family of the Buckes, one of whom wrote *A Vindication of the Life of Richard III.*, quoted by Walpole in his *Historic Doubts*; and there are large estates near Sheffield, which formerly belonged to the family, and bear their name to the present day. The father of Mr. Webster was in the army, and served during the rebellion in Ireland, and also for some years in the West Indies. Master Benjamin was educated, by choice, for the navy; but in consequence of the arrival of the weak, piping times of peace, his father refused to incur the expense of fitting him out, "only to be a middy all his life." Deprived of a sea life, he imbibed a love for a scenic one, and deserted miniature ship-building for the construction of a little theatre, for which he had composed a pantomime, with models of astounding tricks, at the precocious age of twelve.

He had lost his mother, an amiable and excellent woman, when he had scarcely emerged from infancy, and his home was rendered cheerless by the presence of a penurious step-mother. As years rolled on, family differences became not unfrequent, and ultimately drove him, at the age of seventeen, to try his own fortune in the world. He started for Cheltenham, and, after an interview with the manager of the theatre, was engaged by him, at a salary of twenty-five shillings a-week, to play (at Warwick, Litchfield, and Walsall) harlequin, utility business, and second fiddle in the orchestra. He made his first appearance as Thessalus, in *Alexander the Great*, at Warwick, in which town he lodged with an old couple who were methodists. They took a great liking to our young actor, and introduced him to Rowland Hill, who was preaching there at the time, and who, wishing to convert him from what that amiable enthusiast deemed a profligate course of life, thus addressed him:—"If you are fond of public speaking, how much better it would be to speak out in favour of God, than to speak out in favour of Satan. How sweet a reflection it will be in after-life, to think you have aided in saving souls instead of damning them. Consider how much more a preacher is respected in society than an actor; and if fame is your object, is it not more glorious and honourable to acquire it in a good cause than a bad one? Would it not be more grateful to your feelings, to be blessed by the repentant sinner, for pointing out the road to heaven, than cursed by the unrepenting, for pointing out the road to hell?" In conclusion, Rowland Hill offered to place the young actor in the school for the instruction of *easy* preachers; but although Mr. Webster promised to consider this kind offer, he eventually declined it, saying, he thought there was as good a moral in every play, if rightly understood, as there was in any sermon he ever heard, and that the stage conveyed morality, in its most pleasing form, to the mind, by powerfully exciting the feelings. From Warwick he proceeded to Litchfield, and afterwards visited Walsall and Birmingham. At Walsall he narrowly escaped bringing his dramatic career to a sudden and fatal conclusion; for the stage carpenter had inadvertently placed a scene, through which he was to leap, within a yard of a brick wall; and Mr. Webster, not having examined the place, and leaping with considerable force, was providentially saved by Mr. Betty (the young Roscius) from dashing his brains out. Mr. Watson having got into difficulties, set off to Cheltenham with all the money he could muster, leaving one of the company to pay the salaries of the rest with the last night's receipts; this sum proved insufficient for the purpose, and the company were soon in a very distressed condition. But accident introduced Mr. Webster, and two or three others of the deserted Thespians, to a well-known strolling Irish manager, of the name of Wilson, who stated his confidence of being able to procure a town, if he could only collect a company; and he proposed to his new friends to enter into a sharing speculation with him, he reserving a share and-a-half for himself, as manager. This was speedily agreed to, and Wilson proceeded to Bromsgrove, near Birmingham, where he erected a theatre in a very old barn, the stage being ten feet long and seven feet high. Our hero's ambition was a little damped on witnessing this dingy and dilapidated temple of the drama, but he, nevertheless, commenced his engagement by doubling the parts of Sir Charles Cropland and Stephen Harrowby, in *The Poor Gentleman*, dancing a hornpipe without music, after the comedy, and playing Old Plainway, in *Raising the Wind*, with his head chalked to represent grey hair. For the first week they were very prosperous, and shared eighteen shillings each; but, in about a month, the shares dwindled to eighteen-pence each, per week, and a crust of bread and cheese, washed down with a draught of water, became an absolute luxury; indeed, Mr. Webster would have run some chance of starvation, but that a little maiden of the town had been captivated by the young actor, and sent him certain anonymous parcels of eatables. From this frightful position he was ultimately rescued by Mr. Talbot, the manager of the Belfast, and other theatres, who engaged him at thirty shillings per week, and generously advanced the money to enable him to reach his place of destination.

Here Mr. Webster got on pleasantly enough, but he was very much annoyed by Talbot's telling him that his *forte* lay in low comedy; as, like most comedians, he fancied that he excelled in tragedy, and looked upon Richard the Third as the character in which he should ultimately astonish the



town. After a time he returned to England, and obtained an engagement at the Coburg (now the Victoria), where he remained nine weeks; several unimportant provincial engagements followed this, in which he successively fulfilled the post of ballet-master, principal dancer, leader of the band, light comedian, and low comedian. We next find him at the English Opera, where he sustained the character of Perea, in *Captain Cook*; Raymond, in *Raymond and Agnes*, &c. Here he attracted the notice of Elliston, who expressed himself greatly pleased with Mr. Webster's performance, and wished him to become a member of the Drury Lane Company, over the destinies of which Elliston, at that time, presided; but our actor's vicissitudes were by no means at an end. He experienced very ungenerous conduct at the hands of Elliston, whom he left accordingly, and proceeded to Birmingham, where he was subjected to so many managerial caprices, that he made up his mind, in a fit of disgust, to leave the stage. But Elliston again offered him an engagement, and of so advantageous a character, that he did not deem himself justified in refusing it. Still Mr. Webster was kept in the background, until, in 1825, Shakspeare's play of *Measure for Measure* was produced with a very powerful cast. Mr. Harley, who was to have represented Pompey, the clown, was taken suddenly ill, and the part was sent to Webster, who did not receive it until half-past five in the evening; but he was, notwithstanding, not only perfect in the words, but created so great a sensation in the character, as to obtain the highest eulogy from the leading journals of the day. At the end of the play many of the principal performers shook hands with him and said his fortune was made; but Elliston still kept him in the background, and it was not until his engagement by Mr. Morris, of the Haymarket theatre, that scope was given him for the exhibition of that broad humour and varied talent which his later performances show him to be so abundantly possessed of. His first appearance at the Haymarket was on the 15th of June, 1829, in Mr. Poole's admirable farce of *Lodgings for Single Gentlemen*; here he at once acquired the reputation for which he had so long and so laboriously toiled, and has never since left that establishment, of which he became the lessee, in 1837. The most romantic period of Mr. Webster's life was then terminated, but the most brilliant was before him; his sufferings and vicissitudes were past, but they had taught him valuable lessons; he had studied his profession, step by step, in the severest school—he had passed through that ordeal by which men of the greatest genius have been tried and strengthened, and to which both John Kemble, Edmund Kean, and the great Siddons, was subjected; like them, he had looked nature in the face, trod down want and temptation, and pressed boldly on, until he stood beneath the warm sunbeams of prosperity and public estimation.

In 1844, Mr. Webster became lessee, and is now nearly the sole proprietor of the popular "pet" theatre, the Adelphi, which has made one long season since he opened it, not having closed once during that period, a task which neither Yates, or any other manager before him, ever accomplished.

Mr. Webster is the author of a great number of dramas and other literary works, to which his name has never appeared, besides having been in early days the editor of several publications. His first acted dramatic work was a farce, in two acts, called *Highways and Byeways*, produced at Drury-Lane in 1831, in which Liston obtained a great success. The touching and celebrated drama of *The Golden Farmer* is also one of the children of his active brain; it was written during periods of performance, on the backs of stage letters, and was taken from him in fragments, as he completed them, so that he was unable to read the context, or really know what were its merits, until after it was produced with a "blaze of success." In America, this drama realised a fortune for Mr. Dimsford, the manager, who produced it, and made the reputation of Mr. John Sefton, the renowned Jemmy Twitcher of the piece.

Mr. Webster has been the most successful manager of the present age, and probably so because he has been about the most liberal and spirited; companies unparalleled for the production of our sterling comedies have been from time to time collected within the walls of his theatre; and a remarkable number of original dramas, by the first authors of the day, have been produced under his superintendence. It is pleasurable to know, that Mr. Webster's good fortune is singularly deserved, as he is a man of the purest and most unsullied honour; and although he has sometimes met with serious reverses in his managerial career, he has never failed in honourably carrying out every pecuniary engagement he entered into.

As an actor, he excels in the delineation of what are called character parts, where the performer has to work conjointly with the author in their creation; he is admirable in dramatic eccentricities, and his Malvolio in *Twelfth-Night* is the most perfect we have witnessed; but his range of characters is by no means limited, and perhaps we could not mention two greater contrasts, as dramatic pictures, than his dashing, vigorous representation of the bold Petruchio, and his admirable polished performance of the deceitful and malignant Tartuffe, in the recent translation of Molière's comedy, produced at the Haymarket; a more finished realisation of this subtle and difficult conception, it would be hard to imagine.

Mr. Webster is a correct and careful actor at all times; occasionally he is a very brilliant one; in his worst parts he scarcely falls to mediocrity, in his best he rises to the development of genius. He has a clear and powerful voice, though sometimes deficient in variety; a rich vein of humour, and in serious parts, often exhibits pathetic power of no common kind.

H. T.





MADAME CELESTE as MIAMI.  
IN  
MR BUCKSTONE'S DRAMA OF 'THE GREEN BUSHES.'

"Oh! I could not bear to think you ever loved another."

Act 2 Sc 1

Engraved by Hollis from a Negative type by Mayall.  
For Tallis's Drawing Room Table Book of Modern Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes.

## MADAME CELESTE.

THE professional career of this lady is rather a remarkable one:—a foreigner by birth, and even now unable to speak our language with any great degree of purity, she has still made for herself a new walk in the drama, in which she has not only won universal admiration, but reigned paramount without a rival.

Madame Celeste was born on the 6th of August, 1814, at Paris, where her parents struggled against the pressure of pecuniary difficulties in an obscure and humble path of life; and as, at a very early age, she exhibited signs of a histrionic talent, she was entered as a pupil in the *Conservatoire* of the *Academie Royale de Musique*, where it was soon discovered that she possessed the necessary qualifications for theatrical distinction. During her probation she acted, with Talma, the boy in *Le Vieux Celibataire*, and one of the children with Pasta in *Medea*. She was the regular Cupid of the *Academie*, and for her precocious ability was selected to present the bouquet to Charles X. on the occasion of his visiting the Favart, then the Italian Opera. Here she remained until she nearly attained her fifteenth year, when she received an offer to enter on an American engagement; this she at once accepted, and proceeded to the United States, where she laboured hard at her profession, visiting almost every city in the Union, and finally becoming a great favourite with our transatlantic neighbours. During her residence in the New World she entered into a matrimonial alliance with a gentleman of the name of Elliott, who was charmed by the playful fascination and personal beauty of the young French actress; one child only was the result of this union—a daughter; an amiable and highly interesting young lady, who, a few years since followed her mother's example, and in the early spring of existence, was married to Mr. Johnston of Baltimore, a member of an eminent banking firm in that city. Mr. Elliott is since dead, and Madame Celeste is now in the ranks of that proverbially interesting and irresistible class of women known as widows.

In 1830, while yet but a mere girl, she sailed from New Orleans, and arriving in this country appeared at the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, as Fenella in *Massaniello*, where her touching and simple acting at once won the sympathies and admiration of an English audience. Her dumb expressive action affected the spectators even more than words, and she was eagerly sought after by the management of our principal provincial theatres. Her success was the more remarkable, as at this period she was almost wholly ignorant of the English language. She afterwards fulfilled engagements at Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin, and then arriving in the metropolis, appeared at Drury Lane, and afterwards at the Queen's Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Macfarren, the father of the present popular composer, in a drama called *The French Spy*, which, in consequence of the interest her performance created, drew crowded houses for a considerable period. Although this was not the most favourable field for her exertions, still she acquired no small reputation, and was soon known as a very fascinating and highly talented pantomimic actress. She became a star at most of the minor theatres, and fulfilled engagements successively at the Surrey, the Coburg, Adelphi, and the Strand Theatres, invariably winning not only the approbation but the enthusiastic admiration of her auditors.

In 1832 she visited her native France, and also Italy and Germany, and on her return to this country, fulfilled a brief engagement at Dublin, which city she left for Edinburgh, where such was her attraction, that an extension of her engagement was imperatively demanded by the supporters of the theatre. She had now acquired such a reputation as to induce the management of Drury Lane to offer her a second engagement for more responsible and important business than that which had been previously allotted to her, and she appeared in the March of 1833 with Mademoiselle Duvernay, in the operatic ballet of *The Maid of Cashmere*.

Public taste is an arbitrary thing; and sometimes, with all deference be it spoken, a little whimsical and contradictory; on her appearance at Drury Lane but a year or two since, Madame Celeste had been but coldly received, but now she was most triumphantly welcomed, and vehemently applauded. She played during the season in *The Maid of Cashmere*, *Prince Le Boo*, and *The Revolt of the Harem*.

Madame Celeste now determined upon visiting America, the land which had been the scene of her earliest exertions, and in 1834 she a second time sailed for the United States. Here a reception awaited her which is never accorded by our less excitable people to a popular favourite of any kind; the Swedish Nightingale herself was scarcely caressed and idolised by the American people to a greater extent. She was cheered by the populace whenever she made her appearance, saluted by the soldiery, and elected a free citizen of the States. At Kentucky all the seats were taken weeks before her arrival, and at Washington, the late General Jackson introduced her to the cabinet, who congratulated her on her attaining the honourable distinction of being elected a free citizen of the States. Indeed, America must have been to her the true *El Dorado*; for, during her stay there—a period of three years—she realized, by her histrionic exertions, the enormous sum of £40,000. Our transatlantic neighbours do occasionally convert their admiration to idolatry; but there is still something princely in this munificence to art, from which this country might learn a graceful lesson. The nation that most fosters the artist will, in time, become most renowned for the art. A liberal appreciation, and a generous esteem for excellence, is the true nurse of genius. The more we honour art, the higher do we exalt it. The sculptors of Greece, and the painters of Italy, would never have produced such rare and wonderful productions—

statues and pictures which succeeding ages have gazed with reverent wonder on, and despaired to equal, but that the art and artist were not only cherished and honoured, but ranked among rulers and princes.

Loaded with wealth and honours, she returned to the land of her adoption in 1837, and, on the 7th of October, reappeared at Drury Lane Theatre, in a drama entitled *The Child of the Wreck*, written expressly for her by Mr. Planché. The character was a speechless one; but the mute eloquence of her actions appealed to the audience as powerfully as the most florid and passionate language, while her fawn-like grace and lightness were the theme of general admiration and delight. Her admirable performance secured for the piece a run of thirty nights, successively.

As may be imagined, her reputation was now thoroughly established in this country; and, on the expiration of her engagement at Drury Lane, she proceeded to the Haymarket, and afterwards to the Adelphi, being received at both houses with ardent and enthusiastic admiration. When not performing at these theatres, she has made brief starring engagements in the provinces; and, in the Christmas of 1843, she became, in conjunction with Mr. Webster, the lessee of the Theatre Royal, Williamson-square, Liverpool, the management of which she retained during only one season; as in the autumn of 1844 she assumed the reins of direction at the Adelphi theatre, which she has retained to the present time, and, by the ability and liberality of her management, secured to it a patronage as brilliant as that which it enjoyed in the time of Yates and John Reeve.

Her first great dramatic speaking character was in Bernard's popular drama of *St. Mary's Eve*, the plot of which Mr. Lovell adapted entirely in his play of *The Wife's Secret*, even to the shadows on the blinds, until Mr. Webster altered it to prevent it from being too immediately recognised. Mr. Lovell was perfectly ignorant of the resemblance, having accidentally read a story founded on the drama.

In the particular line of the profession which she has adopted, or we should rather say which she has created, she is without a rival; in comedy, her droll quaintness, imperfect English, and inexhaustible vivacity, keep her audiences in continual roars of laughter; while, in the pathetic parts of domestic drama, she moves the feelings and excites the tears of the spectators as powerfully as the most fluent speaker of the English language on the stage. Let those who doubt this assertion witness her representation of Miami, in Mr. Buckstone's drama of *The Green Bushes*. Her touching devotion to her husband, her doubts of his fidelity towards her, her remorse and mental agony after his murder, and the final breaking of her crushed heart, and flight of her wounded spirit even while fondling the child of her faithless husband, are painfully true to nature. We lately witnessed her assumption of this character at the Adelphi Theatre; in the next box to us sat a gentleman who seemed strongly affected by the performance. In the death scene he sat with his eyes rivetted upon the actress, and large tears trickled down his cheeks; whether the performance recalled the memory of one whom he had loved and lost, we cannot say, but we thought so at the time; for as the last breath quivered on the lips of Miami, and the curtain began slowly to descend, his head sank heavily upon his breast, and he was carried out insensible. Whatever secret chord might have been touched in his heart, his emotion was a faithful evidence of the pathetic powers of the subject of this memoir.

Madame Celeste is, perhaps, the most graceful woman upon our stage; her attitudes, though simple and natural, are singularly elegant; and, in repose, she resembles a beautiful marble statue which the sculptor, by some superhuman art, had rendered flexible and warm. Her *forte* is generally supposed to be in the representation of characters which involve a pleasant mingling of singing, dancing, and action; but although, in such pieces, she is invariably very interesting and charming, we think her capable of a higher flight in the paths of the drama. Her representation of Miami can not be surpassed for pathetic interest, and has extended the run of *The Green Bushes* to nearly four hundred nights. Her performance of the Gipsy Queen in *The Flowers of the Forest*, is another popular and beautiful realization of the same cast, while her artistic displays in *The Willow Copse*, *The Cabin Boy*, *The Sons of Mars*, &c., especially in the last new drama of *The Queen's Secret, or the Iron Mask*, have excited the tears and applause of the crowds who nightly frequent the Adelphi, and her grace and activity in *The Taming of a Tartar*, *The Devil's Violin*, *Giralda*, &c., have been the delight of all who have witnessed her exertions.

In proof of the estimation in which Madame Celeste is held by her own countrymen, she has had several offers to act at the Porte St. Martin, Academie Royal, and Gymnasium Theatres in Paris, and lately was honoured with a proposal to lead the tragic and high comedy business of the Odeon, the second classic theatre of France.

She has amassed a considerable fortune by her histrionic talents, and lives in a style of affluence, esteemed by all who know her, as a woman of most amiable and endearing manners; she is a very delightful creature in society, extremely affable and cheerful, brilliant in conversation, and full of anecdotes, which she relates in an irresistibly amusing manner.

Madame Celeste is now playing her farewell nights previous to her departure for America, where she is going to take her last adieus of her first and kindest friends; after which she intends to return again to the management of the theatre where she has so long enjoyed such brilliant success.

The esteem in which she is held by the Company may be best inferred by the fact, that from the highest to the lowest, they have entered into a subscription to present her with a handsome testimonial of their admiration and affection, in the shape of a diamond bracelet of great value.





MR. O. SMITH AS GRAMPUS.

IN BUCKSTONE'S CELEBRATED DRAMA OF THE WRECK ASHORE.

" You know me, don't you ? "

Act I. Sc 4.

*Engraved by Baker from a Daguerreotype by Mayall.*

*For Father's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs and Anecdotes.*



## MR. RICHARD JOHN SMITH.

MR. RICHARD JOHN SMITH, popularly known as O'Smith, a name he obtained in consequence of his admirable personation of Obi, in the drama of *Three Fingered Jack*, was born at York in the year 1786; his father and mother were both in the theatrical profession, and were much respected in the York circuit for talent, and also for respectability in private life. His mother, whose maiden name was Scrace, had previously enjoyed considerable reputation as an actress in the Dublin Theatre, where his father had nearly fallen a victim to the following accident:—Performing Polydore, one evening, in the tragedy of *The Orphan*, in which character he has to destroy himself by rushing on the sword of his brother, Castalio, Mr. Smith, not knowing that Mr. Reddish, who played Castalio, had a sword instead of a foil, rushed on the point, which penetrated his side; and had not the sword providentially broken, the wound might have been attended by the most fatal consequences. Mr. Smith fell, saying that he was killed! and Mr. Reddish, greatly distressed in mind, exclaimed, "I have killed the man, but, by Heaven, I had no intention." The wound, however, upon examination, proved less dangerous than had been anticipated, and the actor recovered, to the great joy of his young wife, to whom he had been united not quite a month.

Upon the subsequent removal of the family to Bath, young Smith, then but six years old, made his first appearance on the stage in the character of Ariel, in Dr. Hawksworth's fairy tale of *Edgar and Emmeline*, and continued for some years to perform such characters as were suited to his juvenile appearance and abilities. His family having other views for him, he was, in due time, placed in the office of an attorney in that city; but the painting room of the theatre, to which, from his father's situation of treasurer, he obtained habitual access, possessed superior attractions for him. Pens and parchment were abandoned for brushes and canvass, which occasioned a total neglect of his appointed pursuits. This dereliction from what his family considered as a serious and essential duty, was productive of unpleasant altercations, in consequence of which, and to avoid the obnoxious duties imposed upon him, he entered on board a merchantman, and sailed from Bristol to the coast of Africa, in 1805. At Sierra Leone his talent for drawing attracted the notice of the Governor, who proposed to take him under his protection, but the captain refused to dispense with his services. While in the River Gabon, from motives of humanity, he assisted the escape of two slaves, a father and son, who were confined in the hold of the vessel; the particulars of which adventure are related in "A Tough Yarn," published in *Bentley's Miscellany*.

On his return to England his early passion for the stage was revived by his witnessing the performance of one or two grand serious pantomimes; at that time a great novelty in the country. This inclination, certainly a very natural one, considering his theatrical connections, encountered the serious opposition of his friends, who were bent on seeing him one day Lord Chancellor. To avoid these unpleasant disputes he left Bath, rambled through Wales and part of Ireland, and then crossed over to Liverpool, where he was pressed and sent on board the receiving ship, from whence he was released on stating himself to be an actor, and giving them "a passionate speech" as "a taste of his quality."

At length he was engaged by Mr. Macready, the father of the celebrated tragedian, as prompter, painter, and actor of all work, at the liberal salary of twelve shillings a-week. It was, however, an excellent school for a young beginner, as Mr. Macready was an indefatigable manager, well acquainted with the business of the stage, and a strict disciplinarian. Circumstances not permitting the young actor to travel in his own carriage, he was often compelled to walk his journeys, and on one occasion, while travelling between Sheffield and Rochdale, nearly perished in the snow: an incident which he has himself forcibly described in the following abbreviated letter:—"Thank God I have at last reached Rochdale in safety. I left Sheffield on Saturday morning, alone, and on foot. I found the road in many places cut through the snow, eight or nine feet deep, and made my way with difficulty through a cross-country road to Thong, a village about twenty-two miles from Sheffield. Early next morning I arose to pursue my journey. After proceeding three or four miles, through a heavy fall of snow, I lost the track of the road, and after some time spent in fruitless endeavours to regain the path, found it alike impossible to return or to proceed. Heart-sick and weary, and benumbed with cold, I sat down in the snow, to wait the chance of some casual assistance. I took out my pocket-book and pencil, and endeavoured to address a few lines to you and the family, but found it impossible. I felt a drowsy sensation creeping upon me, which all my endeavours were unable to shake off, and I resigned myself to my fate; when I thought I heard the barking of a dog. This aroused me from my stupor, and I endeavoured to whistle and call him. The sagacious animal shortly after found me where I lay, licked my face and hands, and by his barking and howling, attracted the attention of his master, who was on horseback. He came to my assistance, not without difficulty placed me behind him, and carried me to Marsden."

Tempted by an offer of superior advantages, he left Mr. Macready for the Edinburgh and Glasgow theatres, then under the management of Mr. Rock, and here his talent in serious pantomime and extravagant characters first attracted attention. He returned to Bath in the year 1807, and made so

great an impression in the part of Robert, in the pantomime of *Raymond and Agnes*, as induced Mr. Elliston to offer him an engagement at the Surrey Theatre.

A writer in the *Monthly Magazine*, thus referred to this period of his career:—"this gentleman was eminent in assassins, sorcerers, the moss-trooping heroes in Sir Walter Scott's poems, and other romantic characters, in which a bold, or rather a gigantic figure could be turned to good account. On one occasion, a performer who played the leading part in a burlesque, was taken ill, and for want of any body else at hand, Mr. Obi Smith undertook the part, and his performance was so extraordinary, that he became instantly, by acclamation, the burlesque actor of the theatre!—playing this character, which had before been turned to very little account, forty or fifty nights successively. Smith has since played several comic characters of a coarse description, with great success, at Drury-Lane, and might probably do more, were the opportunity afforded him. His Captain Goff, in a play called *The Pirate*, was one of the finest pictures perhaps ever seen upon the stage. He fills up his time in studying costume, &c.; is a very grave man in his manners and demeanour; and has very little idea, probably, when he plays comic characters, why it is the people laugh at him."

This is doubtless the true intent and meaning of burlesque; an apparent contradiction between the language and sentiments, and the manner of expressing them; committing the greatest absurdities in action and delivery, with a perfect unconsciousness of their ludicrous effect, and this Mr. O'Smith certainly does to perfection. The late Mr. Elliston, no indifferent judge of talent, gave up the part of Bombastes to him, after having played it one night, very candidly saying, "you perhaps can make something of the part, though I cannot." That he did make something very considerable of it, may be inferred from the fact, that his representation of Bombastes, for comic power, and ludicrous effect, has been placed on a par with Liston's celebrated performance of the same whimsical character.

In 1813, Mr. Elliston having taken the Olympic Theatre, engaged Mr. Kean, then a provincial actor, as stage-manager and principal melo-dramatic actor, and he was to have made his first appearance in the character of Mandeville in *The False Friend*, but a dispute with the management of Drury-Lane, which was not settled without difficulty, prevented his appearance, and Mr. Smith was sent for from the Surrey to perform the part, which he did to the perfect satisfaction of the audience.

After having played at most of the London theatres, including Drury-Lane, Covent-Garden, and the Lyceum, Mr. Smith at last settled at the Adelphi, then under the management of Messrs. Yates and Mathews, where his talents were duly appreciated and encouraged, and where he has since remained, and has been long regarded as an essential part of the attractions of that well conducted establishment.

While Mr. Smith was engaged at the Lyceum, and during the run of *The Bottle Imp*, he became so famous for his representations of demons and monsters, that he addressed a very whimsical and amusing letter to the management, soliciting to be permitted to appear sometimes in his own natural shape, without the accompaniment of brimstone and blue fire. He says—"for the last five years of my life, I have played nothing but demons, devils, monsters, and assassins; and this line of business, however amusing it may be to the public, or profitable to the managers, has proved totally destructive of my peace of mind, detrimental to my interests, and injurious to my health. I find myself banished from all respectable society; what man will receive the Devil upon friendly terms, or introduce a Demon into his family circle? *My infernal reputation follows me everywhere, &c.*"

As an actor Mr. Smith's talent is of a very remarkable and varied order, unequalled in the representation of creations of a supernatural cast, and in the delineation of terrific grandeur and implacable ferocity; giving to his performance of the arch-fiend that sepulchral character and derisive malignity which have so long been considered the chief features of the satanic character; and in his appearance recalling to our memory Milton's fine comparison of the fiend to a mountain pine struck by lightning, still standing in stately solitude, with singed top and bare branches, upon the blasted heath; yet can he not only assume the very reverse of these gloomy pictures, but make an audience roar with laughter at his comic delineations, or melt them with sympathy by his portrayal of parental and tender emotions. This latter talent he evinced to a painful extent by his performance, some years since, at the English Opera House of the maniac Githian, in a piece called *The Cornish Miners*, where he visits the grave of his lost child and covers it with flowers; every movement of the actor was watched by the audience, and tears trembled in the dimmed eyes of many a father who witnessed it. Every character which he attempts he devotes himself to thoroughly, and studies it in every aspect and feeling, and whatever may be its importance, performs it with as much care and exactness as if he considered that the fate of the piece depended entirely upon his representation.

Mr. Smith may now be justly considered as one of the veterans of the stage, being in his sixty-seventh year, and though he has scarcely the energy of his younger days, he is still without a rival in his peculiar line of business, and has been for more than half a century, a justly esteemed member of the profession.

H. T.





*From a Daguerreotype by Paine of Brooklyn*

*Fanny Cooper*

## MISS FANNY COOPER.

THE parents of this young lady were both in the dramatic profession, and her mother attained some distinction as the representative alike of tragedy and comedy heroines; her father, being induced by the success of many of our English actors in the United States, sailed for America and died there in 1825. His daughter Fanny, the subject of this memoir, was born in London in the year 1819, and her mother, feeling her health declining, gradually withdrew herself from the profession, and devoted her time to the education and advancement of her daughter, who, not being intended for the stage, was studiously kept apart from the drama and its associations. Mrs. Parry, a lady of wealth and some distinction in Surrey, generously received Miss Cooper beneath her roof, and behaved to her with the kindness of a parent; but the young lady's predilection for theatrical life began to show itself in too powerful a manner to be pleasing to the adverse tastes of Mrs. Parry, and she consequently returned to her home, where her mother, yielding to her wish, addressed herself to educate her daughter for the stage. At the age of fourteen she made her first appearance at the Reading Theatre, as Sophia, in *The Road to Ruin*, and we believe that she met with as much success as is commonly obtained by one so young in a first experiment; still, a lapse of some months occurred before an opportunity offered itself for a second appearance. This took place at the Richmond Theatre, for the benefit of her father-in-law, when the young aspirant for dramatic honours sustained the character of Christine, in *Love in Humble Life*, and Mr. John Poole, the dramatist, and other literary gentlemen who were present, congratulated the young actress upon her success, and the probability of her ultimate distinction in the profession.

Miss Cooper shortly afterwards obtained an engagement with Mr. Downe, the manager of the York circuit, an admirable school for a young actress, and here she may be said to have learnt the essential rudiments of the histrionic art, as she had to perform a number of diverse and unimportant characters, and thus she acquired that easy deportment and familiarity with the stage which is indispensable to the dramatic artist.

Her next engagement was with Mr. Robertson, of the Lincoln circuit, which she joined in 1837, and where she performed the leading tragic and comic characters; her progress here was so rapid, that she was speedily looked upon as one of the most promising young actresses in the provinces, and sought for accordingly by country managers.

In consequence of a strong recommendation from the late Mrs. Waylett, who had, during a starring visit to Mr. Robertson's circuit, seen Miss Cooper's performance with great satisfaction, she received an offer from Mr. Benjamin Webster, of the Haymarket Theatre, tendering her "the second business, with a part of the first." Such an engagement as this was, of course, willingly accepted, and Miss Cooper took her farewell of the Lincoln circuit with a benefit at Wisbeach, performing *Rosalind*, in *As You Like It*, to a crowded house, and receiving from the audience many tokens of their admiration and esteem.

Accompanied by her mother, Miss Cooper arrived in London, and made her *début* at the Haymarket at the opening of Mr. Webster's second season, on the 16th of April, 1838, in the character of Lydia, in Knowles's comedy of *The Love Chase*. Miss Vandenhoff had been the original representative of the part, and it is certainly not too much to say, that Miss Cooper's performance suffered nothing in reputation from a comparison with that of the former lady. Her youthful and exceedingly pleasing appearance, and the graceful simplicity of her manner, won for her an immediate interest among the audience, and the fairest anticipations of the future seemed warranted by her success. But Mr. Webster did not require an actress for leading business, Mrs. Walter Lacy, Miss Elphinstone, and Madame Celeste, were in possession of that line of characters which Miss Cooper had hoped to obtain, and the young actress felt no small amount of disappointment. After some remonstrance with the management against the allotment of such characters to her as she was required to perform, she eventually refused a part of more than ordinary insignificance, and by so doing, incurred a very heavy fine, and her salary was withheld until the fine was paid; at the conclusion of the season, however, Mr. Webster returned the salary which had been suspended, and the engagement was cancelled by mutual consent.

Miss Cooper then reappeared before her old patrons in the Lincoln circuit, where she was heartily welcomed, and afterwards fulfilled several provincial engagements with great success, terminating her tour just before the commencement of Mr. Hammond's unfortunate speculation at Drury Lane, which lasted from the 26th of October, 1839, to the 29th of February, 1840. Miss Cooper was engaged, but her services were seldom required, and then for characters of no great importance. It is almost needless to say that this engagement was by no means a profitable one, nor was her next more fortunate, she being one of the company with which Miss Kelly opened her little theatre in Dean-street, Soho, on the 25th of May, 1840, which ill-judged experiment lasted no longer than five nights.

In the following June the Lyceum opened, under the management of a committee, with a very

admirable company, of which Miss Cooper was a member. During their short season she had some scope for the display of her versatile talents; and in Madame Darbert, in *The Three Secrets*, Gwynneth Vaughan, and other characters of the same nature, she was eminently successful.

Her next engagement was under the management of Madame Vestris, when that lady opened Covent-Garden Theatre, with a very powerful company, on the 7th of October, 1840. Miss Cooper's first appearance was on the 29th, as Benedetta, in Mr. Lover's musical drama of *The Greek Boy*. She performed several other important characters with marked success; and in the gorgeous revival of *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, sustained that of Helena in such a manner as to win universal encomiums and admiration.

At the close of Covent-Garden she accepted an engagement as leading lady at the Windsor Theatre, during the last season of Mr. Penley's management, and opened as Clari, in *The Maid of Milan*. The notices of the local press were of the most flattering kind, and she concluded her engagement in the character of Rosalind, in *As You Like It*.

Upon the reopening of Covent-Garden by Madame Vestris, in September, 1841, Miss Cooper rejoined the company, and again appeared as Helena, with the same favour as in the previous season, and also performed several original and highly responsible characters. It was during this season that she was united to Mr. T. H. Lacy, then the manager of the Sheffield Theatre: their marriage took place on the 25th of January, 1842, at St. Paul's, Covent-Garden.

The Vestris dynasty at Covent-Garden terminating in the April of 1842, Mrs. Lacy accompanied her husband to Sheffield, and appeared there, for the first time, on the 4th of the following May, as Madame Darbert, and also in her favourite character of Rosalind, Mr. Lacy sustaining that of the melancholy Jaques, and Mr. G. V. Brooke appearing as Orlando. After some other provincial engagements she returned to Covent-Garden, where she was engaged by Mr. C. Kemble for the two following seasons. That theatre opened on the 11th of September, with the opera of *Norma*, and a new after-piece by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, called *Gertrude's Cherries*, in which Miss Cooper (for she still retained that name in the profession) represented the part of Angelica. She subsequently appeared as Harriet, in *The Jealous Wife*, when Mrs. Salzberg (formerly the celebrated Miss Phillips) returned to the stage, and sustained Mrs. Oakley; Margaret, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*; Mary Thornberry, in *John Bull*; Roshanna, in *Oberon*; Young Lady Lambert, in *The Hypocrite*, &c.

She then proceeded to Brighton, opening as Margaret, in *Love's Sacrifice*, for the benefit of her husband, that gentleman representing Elmore; and after fulfilling a short engagement there, she performed during the summer at the Pavilion Theatre, where she sustained the leading tragedy. On the opening of Covent-Garden on the 2nd of October, 1843, under the brief management of Mr. H. J. Wallack, she appeared in several principal characters, amongst which were Ruth, in the comedy of *Woman*; Desdemona; Grace Harkaway, in *London Assurance*; Julia, in *The Rivals*, &c.

After again performing for a short time at the Pavilion Theatre, Mrs. Lacy and her husband were both engaged by Mrs. Warner and Mr. Phelps for their famous legitimate experiment at Sadler's Wells Theatre, which commenced on the 27th of May, 1844, Miss Cooper appearing on the second week of performance as Desdemona. In the following October she quitted the establishment, and proceeded with her husband to Manchester, where she made her appearance as Mariana in *The Wife*, and where she afterwards performed Maritana in *Don Caesar* for twenty-four consecutive nights to full houses as a first piece.

On the opening of the second season at Sadler's Wells, under Mr. Phelps and Mrs. Warner, Miss Cooper again joined that establishment, and performed a great variety of characters, amongst which her representation of Jane Shore obtained great notice and commendation. Here she remained until Mr. Phelps terminated his third season, when she was engaged by Mr. Maddox for the Princess's Theatre, making her first appearance there on the 14th of June, 1847, as Matilda, in a new piece called *Ladies Beware*, in which her delicate and lady-like style of acting was peculiarly conspicuous. She then appeared as Aspacia, in *The Bridal*, to the Melantius of Mr. Macready, and afterwards performed Cordelia to the King Lear of that gentleman; establishing her reputation in that locality as a highly finished and talented actress. She returned again to Sadler's Wells, and remained at that theatre a great and deserved favourite until a very late period, playing a comprehensive round of characters in tragedy, comedy, and farce, and winning the good opinion of every frequenter to the theatre. For the last two years, we regret to say, that she has been unable, from severe illness, to continue her professional duties, except at brief and uncertain intervals. A few occasional performances for benefits, and a brief engagement at the Surrey, comprise the account of the latter part of her histrionic career.

As an actress she is chiefly distinguished in the higher walks of comedy, and in certain characters of this cast she has probably no superior upon the boards; her youthful and interesting appearance, graceful carriage, playful manner, and soft and natural voice, no doubt contribute largely to the impression she creates. In juvenile tragedy also her efforts are highly effective, her Cordelia and Desdemona are admirable, and in characters of that nature she never fails to elicit the sympathy and applause of her audience, but her physical powers are unequal to the highest walks in tragedy. Let us, however, remember that this, her only failing, is merely one of power, while in intelligence and art the actress stands forth without a fault.







MISS CATHERINE HAYES,  
AS ZERLINA IN FRA-DIAVOLO

" Oh, holy Virgin ! whom I adore ,  
Lorenzo's fate and mine watch o'er ! "

*Act 2 Sc 1*

*Engraved by H. Ellis*

*For Tallis's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes*

## MISS CATHERINE HAYES.

THIS gifted vocalist, appropriately called the "Swan of Erin," and so justly the pride of an island long distinguished for its love and appreciation of the divine art of music, was born at No. 4, Patrick-street, in the city of Limerick. Her musical talent was made known at a very early age, and in a somewhat romantic manner. Miss Hayes was on a visit to an aged female relative residing in the town mansion of the Earl of Limerick, near to which was the residence of the late Hon. and Right Reverend E. Knox, and the spacious and luxurious gardens attached to each house stretched in parallel lines down to the picturesque and beautiful banks of the river Shannon. The young visitor being of a timid and retiring nature, often sought the shade of a leafy arbour overhung with wood-bines and honeysuckle, near the brink of the river; here, hidden among the rich foliage, would she sit for hours, and warble the sweet and touching ballads of her native land. Untaught as the feathered vocalists around her—like them, she poured forth her sweet strains out of the lightness of her young and happy heart, and in obedience to the promptings of a nature whose very soul was music. One evening, while thus pleasingly employed, a boat filled with a party rowing down the calm stream for amusement, gently approached the alcove, and paused beneath the shadow of the trees; not a whisper announced to the unconscious girl the immediate vicinity of the audience she was delighting, until, as she was concluding the air of "The Lass of Gowrie," she dwelt upon the last line with that prolonged and thrilling shake of her voice which was destined, in after times, to elicit rapturous applause from crowded and delighted audiences. Her unseen listeners could restrain themselves no longer, but burst into a spontaneous shout of approbation, and the timid girl fled from her concealment like a frightened fawn. Among her auditory on the river was the worthy Bishop Knox, and his correct musical taste at once discerned the germs of that great gift possessed by Miss Hayes.

The young vocalist was immediately invited to the See House, where the kindness of the Bishop soon allayed the inherent timidity of her nature, and she shortly became the leading attraction of a series of musical parties which were given, partially for her instruction, by her generous patron.

Bishop Knox, highly pleased with the rapid progress of his young *protégé*, resolved that the glorious natural voice which she possessed should not be neglected, and having consulted with her friends upon the subject, it was finally determined that her musical education should be confided to some professor of distinction, and Signor Antonio Sapio was at once selected for that purpose.

Accordingly, Miss Hayes was sent to Dublin, where she arrived on the 1st of April, 1839, and immediately took up her residence at the house of Signor Sapio, in Percy-street. It is said that her voice, even at this time, possessed the bell-like clearness, and soft mellowness, which now contribute so greatly to the delight of her audiences; and that her natural taste was remarkable for its purity and refinement; but it was, of course, deficient in the mechanical portion of her art, which is only to be acquired by a well-directed, systematic, and industrious course of study. This she devoted herself to with an eager avidity, amounting to enthusiasm; her whole soul was devoted to the cultivation of her beloved art; and her progress, now that it was under judicious direction, was singularly rapid; indeed, so much so, that after one month's instruction, she was permitted to make her first public appearance.

This, then dreaded event, took place on the 3rd of May, 1839, in the great room of the Rotunda, at the annual concert of her instructor, before a large and fashionable audience. Although her great timidity scarcely permitted her fairly to exhibit the powers of her beautiful voice, still, when reassured by the cordial welcome bestowed upon her, she sufficiently recovered her self-possession to astonish the professional friends of her instructor, who had heard her sing immediately after her arrival in Dublin, and who could scarcely conceive that a few weeks' instruction could have effected such a difference.

The ardour with which Miss Hayes pursued her musical studies, was such that it had to be restrained by her instructor, for fear that her health might be sacrificed by too close an application to them. Early in 1841, she was introduced to the celebrated pianist, Liszt, who complimented her greatly on the brilliancy of her voice and style; and, indeed, was so much struck with her performance, that he wrote as follows, to the daughter-in-law of her generous patron, the Bishop of Limerick:—"I do not know of any voice more expressive than that of Miss Hayes. I doubt if among the singers of the day, there is one equal in extent and volume, to what her's will be." During the whole of that year, she was one of the principal vocalists at the Anacreontic, Philharmonic, and other concerts, held in the metropolis of Ireland. As an unanswerable evidence of her improvement, and consequently augmented popularity, we may mention, that during this year, her terms gradually rose from five, until they reached ten guineas each performance. During the summer of the same year, she visited and sang at Belfast, Limerick, Parsonstown, &c., everywhere winning "golden opinions from all sorts of people."

During this period an event occurred which Miss Hayes regarded as another era in her existence; it was her introduction to the distinguished singer, "the great creature" of the Italian stage, Lablache, before whom, she, with great diffidence, sang "Qui la Voce," that she might obtain the valuable judgment

of the veteran upon her musical pretensions. Having listened with attention until the air was finished, Lablache, without any expression of approbation, requested her to sing another and more difficult piece, and then another; but he finally expressed his admiration in terms of a flattering character, and invited her to go to the theatre the next evening to hear Grisi and Mario together in *Norma*: she went, and the result of that evening was totally to change her intentions with respect to the future; her greatest ambition had hitherto been limited to becoming a distinguished concert singer, but she felt that a new world was opened to her—her beloved art appeared before her in a totally different aspect; never until then had she seen great singing and great acting combined; and when she beheld the multitudes of wreaths and bouquets which were finally showered down upon the queen of Italian song, she determined to devote herself to the attainment of excellence in the lyric drama.

In the August of 1842 Miss Hayes's period of tuition under Signor Sapia expired, and she returned to her friends in Limerick, to whom she painted with the enthusiasm of an imaginative nature, the brilliant glories of the stage, and besieged them with entreaties to sanction her undertaking the study necessary to obtain success in so lofty and hazardous an enterprise. This proposal they would not at first entertain, but they ultimately yielded to the incessant pleadings of the young enthusiast, and Miss Hayes eventually proceeded to Paris to prosecute her studies under the direction of Signor Emmanuel Garcia, who had educated the ill-fated Malibran for the operatic stage, and to whom Jenny Lind was indebted for some of her earliest lessons.

In the October of 1842, Catherine Hayes arrived at Paris, where, for a period of eighteen months, she studied under Garcia, who, in her own language, proved to her "the dearest, kindest, and the most generous of masters." At the end of that time, he voluntarily declared, that he could not add a single grace or charm to the fully-developed and beautiful voice she possessed, and advised her to go to Italy, where she could best obtain the dramatic instruction necessary for her eventual success upon the lyric stage. She accordingly proceeded to Milan, and placed herself under the direction of Signor Felice Ronconi, then professor of singing to the *Conservatoire Royal*.

While at Milan, she accepted an engagement offered her by Signor Provini, the manager of the Italian Opera at Marseilles, and accordingly made her *débüt* there on the 10th of May, 1845, in Bellini's opera of *I Puritani*, to a house intensely crowded. At first, she experienced a sensation of timidity and faintness so strongly, that these emotions threatened almost to deprive her of the power of utterance: she thought her failure almost a certainty; and has often since declared that the agony of that thought was insupportable. After her first reception, the opera proceeded in ominous silence; not a single expression of approbation did she obtain from that critical audience until the eighth scene, when the beautiful opening polacca, "Son Vergin," aroused in her all her powers, and a burst of approbation fell gratefully upon the ears of the despairing *débutanté*. From this moment she proceeded with increased vigour and freedom of execution; and, on the fall of the curtain, the shower of flowers thrown to her feet, and the enthusiastic plaudits of the audience, proclaimed her perfect success.

At the expiration of her engagement, she again devoted herself to study, from which she was drawn by an offer from Signor Morelli, of the position of *prima donna* of the *La Scala Theatre* at Milan, where she appeared in Donizetti's opera of *Linda di Chamouni*. Of her reception some idea may be formed, when we state that she was called before the curtain no less than TWELVE times in the course of the evening. On her second appearance, which was in *Otello*, her exquisite and touching performance gained for her the title of "The Pearl of the Theatre."

She next proceeded to Vienna, where she met with equal success, and afterwards to Venice, where she appeared on the first night of the carnival of 1847, in a new opera entitled *Albergo de Romana*, which her brilliant singing saved from condemnation.

She again returned to Italy, and at Florence became acquainted with Catalani, who treated her with the greatest kindness and hospitality, and on one occasion kissing her affectionately, said—"What would I not give to be in London when you make your *débüt*! Your fortune is certain; and, remember, whenever you come, my doors shall always be open to you."

After the fulfilment of a second engagement in Vienna, where Ricci composed his *Estella* for her, and where she also appeared as *Norma*, the exquisite performance of which by Grisi, first attracted the attention of Miss Hayes to the stage; she successively visited Bergamo, Verona, Florence, and Genoa, representing *Maria di Rohan*, and the leading characters in Verdi's works with great success, and indeed, constantly increasing reputation.

Having concluded her engagement at the Carlo Felice, in Genoa, Miss Hayes was offered her own terms for London, both by Mr. Lumley, for her Majesty's Theatre, and Mr. Delafield, for the Royal Italian Opera at Covent-Garden.

She made her appearance at the last-mentioned house, as *Linda*, on the 10th of April, 1849, with most complete success, winning not only the rapturous applause of the audience, but the general approbation of the public press. During the season, she had the honour of singing at a private concert at Buckingham Palace, and of being complimented by her Majesty "on her deserved success."

In the November of the same year, she visited her native country, and sang at the Dublin Philharmonic Society, where she created an immense sensation; which was raised even to a higher degree of enthusiasm, when she appeared with the Italian company at the Theatre Royal, and performed *Lucia*, *Norma*, and *Amina*. She then visited Limerick and Cork as the *prima donna* of the opera company,

meeting in each city with that warmth and heartiness of reception, for which her countrymen are proverbial.

Returning to London, she engaged with Mr. Lumley, of her Majesty's Theatre, for the season of 1850, and made her appearance there on the 2nd of April, in Lucia, thoroughly sustaining the great reputation she had acquired. In the winter, she again visited Ireland, and also made a triumphal tour through the English provincial towns, where she was everywhere received with acclamations, especially at Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. She then again visited the "eternal city," and appeared at the Apollo Theatre, at Rome, during the Carnival of 1851, concluding her engagement in Maria de Rohan, which character she performed for twelve successive evenings. After a professional visit to Trouville and Havre, she again returned to England.

Here, after a few farewell concerts, Miss Hayes determined on visiting the New World; and having engaged for her passage on board the *Pacific*, in which, by a singular coincidence, she occupied the state berth originally prepared for Jenny Lind in this magnificent vessel, she went on board on Wednesday, the 3rd of September. As the vessel was departing, and Miss Hayes's friends, who had accompanied her on board, were returning to land, they gave her three hearty cheers, in which they were joined by the whole of the passengers, the distinguished vocalist standing by the side of the captain upon the paddle-box, and waving her handkerchief as long as they remained in sight.

Arriving at New York, Miss Hayes made her first appearance at Tripler Hall, on Tuesday, the 23rd of September, and our excitable transatlantic neighbours gave her a most enthusiastic reception. The hall was intensely crowded, and several thousand dollars were actually refused at the doors. But perhaps we shall give a more truthful and interesting account of her appearance there, and of the opinions entertained of Miss Hayes's talents in New York, by making a few quotations in reference to it from the heap of American papers which now lie before us. The *New York Weekly Mirror* says—"Her appearance was hailed by a shout of welcome that reverberated like thunder through the building, and made the windows fairly tremble. Shout after shout, mingled with a universal clapping of hands, arose for nearly a minute, and after it had died away it was caught up by the thousands outside, who thronged Mercer-street, in the hope of catching some stray notes of the Swan of Erin. When the applause ceased, Catherine Hayes was evidently deeply agitated by feelings aroused by the warmth and kindness of her reception; and when she commenced her voice wavered and trembled; but as she proceeded she gained confidence, and did justice to herself. The piece she sang was "Ah! Mon Fils," from *The Prophete*, and a more difficult song there cannot be found in the whole range of vocal music. It is a mourning complaint, a passionate utterance of grief, devoid of melody or extrinsic ornament to tickle the ear, and is, consequently, entirely dependent on the truthful conception of the singer for its effect. In the hands of an ordinary vocalist it would be a mere melancholy drone, but Catherine Hayes made it the embodiment of living grief—her voice wept and trembled with emotion, expressing with painful truthfulness utter desolateness of heart. To our thinking this was the vocal triumph of the evening, and more artistic than any other effort.

Catherine Hayes is a great artiste; she is not without blemish—none are perfect, but she possesses the elements of universal popularity. She has art for the critic, and nature for the mass, and she can sway them both at will." From *The Spirit of the Times* we extract the following:—"To compare her, as some have done, with Jenny Lind, is at once out of the question. They are strikingly different, and we cannot imagine with what object this has been done. Jenny Lind has a voice which has, indisputably, the advantage of Kate Hayes in its upper notes, while it is altogether as inferior in extent and quality in the lower portion of its register. And as thoroughly accomplished and educated artists, we must confess that they stand upon a *par*." Another paper speaks of her second appearance thus:—"There is no imitation of any other artist; her conception is broad, bold, and masterly. The last piece she sang was the lovely Irish ballad, "Savourneen Deelish," which, to the mass, was the great piece of the evening. She delivers these simple airs with a pathos so natural, a passion so thrilling, and a gentle simplicity so truly characteristic, that she charms the people with an irresistible spell, so that the tears come unbidden, and will not be stayed. Her success is no longer problematical; it is a settled fact, and her fame is now broadcast over the country."

Miss Hayes is a lady of great personal attractions and gentle unassuming manners; her voice is of singular natural beauty and extraordinary compass; and when we consider her great enthusiasm in the glorious art to which she has utterly devoted herself, and her wonderful industry in improving the organ with which she has been gifted, we must confess that brilliant and flattering as her numerous triumphs have been, still they are well deserved.

## MR. JAMES HENRY HACKETT.

AMONG the distinguished American actors who have visited this country and courted the judgment of a metropolitan audience, the name of this gentleman stands very prominently forward. He was born in the city of New York, on the 15th of March, 1800. According to his "family pedigree," which, as the last of the "barons of Hackett's town," Ireland, Mr. Hackett holds (duly and officially attested and issued in 1834, by the Ulster king at arms), he is descended from "*Haket*, a Norman noble and a general who accompanied William the Conqueror to England."\*

While a boy, at school, he displayed a remarkably vivacious and imitative turn of mind, and his juvenile histrionic talent was employed in portraying the peculiarities of his tutors, which he did in a manner to call forth the unqualified approbation and delight of his schoolfellows.

In the autumn of 1815, he was admitted a student of Columbia College; but a severe fit of illness interrupted his classical pursuits, and on his recovery he commenced the study of the law. But it was not as a lawyer that Mr. Hackett was to acquire distinction; Shakspeare possessed more attractions for him than Blackstone, and a study of the laws of mind, as exemplified by the poet, lured him from the more useful but less attractive study of the laws of the land. Not feeling himself rightly placed in life, he abandoned his legal studies and entered the counting-house of a relative with the view of becoming a merchant. Although an ardent admirer of the universal poet, he so regulated and controlled the enthusiastic admiration he entertained of his wonderful dramas, as to content himself with a close and analytical perusal of them in the solitude of his own chamber. His anxiety was not to display that which he knew, by appearing at the theatre, but to dive deeply into the arcana of beauty and wisdom contained in the works of the poet, and to learn that of which he was ignorant.

In 1819 Mr. Hackett married, and settled in Utica, New York. Here he became extensively engaged in trade, until, desirous of extending his sphere of enterprise, he returned to the city of New York, and became a merchant in Front-street, in that city, in the year 1825. Within that year, becoming unsuccessful, unsettled, and dissatisfied, he turned his attention to the stage, and made his first appearance on the boards at the Park Theatre, New York, March, 1826, as Justice Woodcock, in *Love in a Village*, and soon after produced Shakspeare's *Comedy of Errors*, acting the Dromio of Ephesus, and imitating the personal peculiarities of a very favourite comedian, who performed the twin-brother of Syracuse, to such perfection as to confound the audience with their respective identity, and convulse the house with laughter. This performance created an unprecedented sensation, and filled the theatre for a large portion of the season. In the April of the following year, having crossed the Atlantic, he made his appearance in London at Covent-garden theatre, as Sylvester Daggerwood, in which he introduced anecdotes illustrative of American life, and imitations of Kean and Macready. Such was the enthusiasm with which the imitation of Edmund Kean was received, that, soon after, he was invited by the celebrated and since retired Richard Jones, of Covent-Garden, to perform a scene of *Richard III.* in imitation of Kean, at his benefit, which Mr. Hackett did, and then the whole character, with great applause, for the late Mr. Elliston, who had just receded from the management of Drury-Lane, and taken the Surrey Theatre.

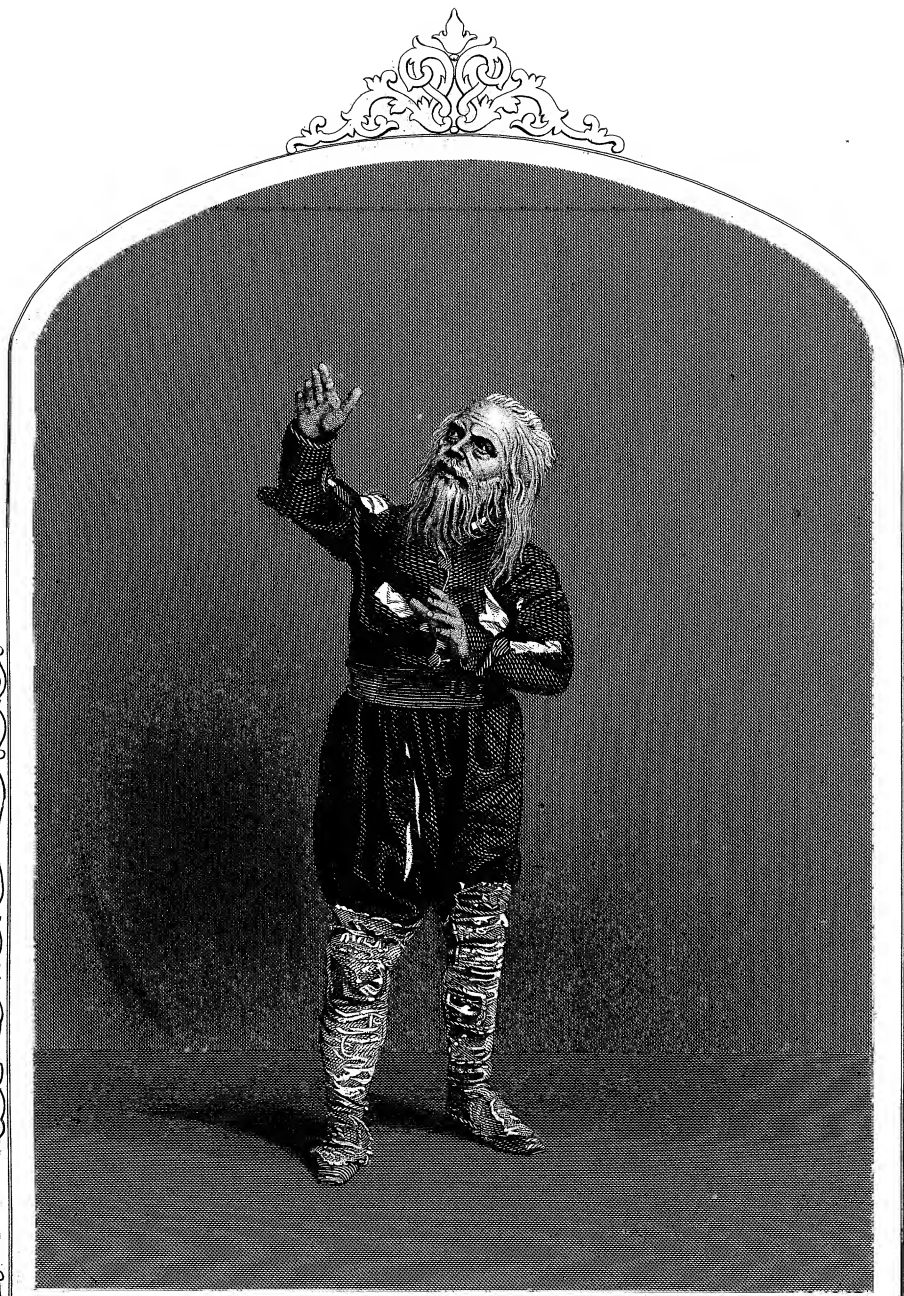
In the November of 1832 he appeared at Drury-lane Theatre in Colman's comedy of *Who Wants a Guinea?* in an alteration of the character of Solomon Gundy, which he transformed into a Yankee of the name of Solomon Swop, of course retaining all the original situations; and both in this, and the singularly opposite character of the persecuted Frenchman, Morbleu, in *Monsieur Tonson*, was he eminently successful.

In the March of 1833 he reappeared at Covent-garden as Colonel Nimrod Wildfire, in *The Kentuckian*, and delighted the public by his faithful representation of American eccentricities. The following May found him at the Haymarket, where he produced *Rip Van Winkle*, a drama founded on Washington Irving's highly interesting story, in which he represented an American descended of a Dutch family, with a success which ensured for the piece an extensive run, and considerably enhanced his spreading reputation as an actor of character parts. He concluded his engagement by a representation of Shakspeare's richest and most humorous comic creation, Sir John Falstaff, appearing as the fat knight in the first part of *Henry IV.*, which was favourably received, though but his second performance of the character on any stage. He had first played it about a year previously at Philadelphia, Mr. Charles Kean sustaining Hotspur; that being, by a singular coincidence, also his first appearance in that character.

In 1839 he carried on a highly interesting correspondence with the late Hon. John Quincy

\* Hackett, of Hackett's-town, County Carlow, and Shelton Abbey, County Wicklow, derived from Dominus Paganus de Hackett, who himself descended from one of the great Norman barons under the Conqueror at Hastings, whose name appears on the roll of Battel Abbey. Paganus, in more than a century afterwards, accompanied Henry II. into Ireland, and acquired broad lands and seignories there; and his descendants, generation after generation, were subsequently parliamentary barons and potent magnates in Ireland.—*Burke's Armorie of England, Scotland, and Ireland.* London, 4to., 1844.





MR. HACKETT AS RIP VAN WINKLE.

"Why the little bush has grown a great big tree in the night,  
and there hangs my gun in the branches" —

RIP VAN WINKLE

Act 2, Sc. 1

*Engraved by Halls from a Daguerrotype by Mayall.  
For Tallis Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes*



Adams, ex-president of the United States, respecting Shakspeare's character of Hamlet; printed copies of the letters lie before us now, and we regret that in a memoir of the present limits we can but allude to them. They prove Mr. Hackett a subtle and most industrious critic, and a very acute commentator upon the works of Shakspeare.

In 1840, he again visited England, and reappeared at Drury Lane Theatre, where he performed Falstaff (in *Henry IV., Part I.*) repeatedly, with great success. Some depreciating newspaper criticisms having appeared, prefaced by what Mr. Hackett regarded as a *false* ideal of the character and its qualities, he published a reply, entitled *Falstaff; a Shaksperian Tract*, in which he vindicated the justice and propriety of his conception; and, after quoting from the original text various proofs of his own views, concluded thus:—"Shakspeare has invested that philosophic compound of vice and sensuality with no amiable or tolerable quality to gloss or cover his moral deformity, except a surpassingly brilliant and charming wit, and a spontaneous and irresistible flow of humour."

In 1841, he gave further evidence of the comprehensive nature of his dramatic talent, by appearing in that arduous and wonderful creation of the greatest of dramatic poets, King Lear, which he performed at the Park Theatre, New York, and which had a very successful run, not only in that city, but also in Philadelphia and Boston.

In 1842, he appeared at the Park Theatre as Hamlet, Mrs. Wood representing Ophelia; and in the same year he performed Sir Pertinax Mac Sycophant, in Macklin's comedy of *The Man of the World*, which has since become one of his standard parts; and then branching out into a very opposite kind of character, appeared as the Irishman, O'Callaghan, in *His Last Legs*, on the same evening, as an afterpiece.

Encouraged by his success in Lear and Hamlet, he appeared during the same year as Richard III., performing the character with a greater regard to historical truth than is usually aimed at by our tragedians.

Having again crossed the Atlantic, Mr. Hackett reappeared in the winter of 1845, at Covent-Garden Theatre, in his favourite part of the fat knight, and in Rip Van Winkle, with a very decided and flattering success. And in the same year, by command of her Majesty, who in company with the Prince Albert, honoured him with their presence; he performed Monsieur Mallet at the Haymarket. Her Majesty and the Prince were much entertained by his representation, and frequently applauded him with great heartiness. Of this performance *The Times* said, "Mr. Hackett's Frenchman is carefully studied from nature, and is altogether unconventional. He abounds in little traits of startling reality, and it is from this quiet truthfulness that his effects are made, rather than the exaggerated absurdities which more commonly constitute a stage 'mounseer.' The mixture of strong inward feeling, with all the outward demonstrations of conventional politeness, is conceived with a true sense of nature, and portrayed with quaint and frequently touching effect."

Having made a visit to England during the present year, as a matter of pleasure, he has been induced to fulfil a few provincial "starring" engagements, and also to appear at the Haymarket as Sir John in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which had such a successful run there, that the manager proposed a flattering engagement to Mr. Hackett to reappear there early next season in a wider range than he has lately represented before an English audience.

Mr. Hackett has, at various periods of his career, held the reins of management at the Old Chatham, the Bowery, and the National Theatres, in New York; and also of the new and beautiful edifice built expressly for him at Boston, known as the Howard Athenæum. Our readers also may remember that he was the manager of the Astor Place Opera House, at New York, when the riot originating in the jealousy entertained by Mr. Forrest towards Mr. Macready occurred, on the 10th of May, 1849. Mr. Hackett was so materially injured in his business as a manager, by his honourable efforts to sustain Mr. Macready, whom he regarded as most unjustly abused, through the influence of Mr. Forrest's friends, that he threw up his lease of the establishment in disgust, and immediately withdrew from all connection with theatrical management, in which resolution he has since persevered. Indeed, since the death of his wife, in 1845, an event which seriously affected his spirits, Mr. Hackett has been seen upon the stage but rarely and irregularly.

It will be seen from this rapid glance at his professional career, that Mr. Hackett is an actor of a surprisingly varied ability; English, Irish, Scotch, Dutch, French, or American peculiarities are all hit off with a wonderful accuracy, while both in the delineation of pathos or humour, he is equally successful. Possibly, no actor that ever trod the stage since the days of Garrick, has played successfully such varied and opposite parts. His great Shaksperian character, Falstaff, has been the study of a life, every light and shade of it is wonderfully brought out, and delineated with great truth and humour. Mr. Hackett enters heartily into the fun of the part, and his smile of triumph and low mellow chuckle at his wit, and the humour of his situations, seem to indicate not only a perfect appreciation, but an absolute love of the character. His appearance, too, is admirable; Falstaff, in all his vast proportion, stands before us, his entrance puts us into good humour—a sort of sunshine radiates from him, and we prepare for mirth. Nor are we disappointed—every line is delivered so pointedly, that the audience share the comedian's acute appreciation of this irresistibly amusing creation. His performance of Falstaff is not only a rare entertainment, but a most intellectual Shaksperian study.



## MR. WILLIAM HARRIES TILBURY.

THIS gentleman, for several years a respected member of the Haymarket company, and a comedian of considerable talent in a line in the profession which cannot, at present, boast of possessing any really *great* actor, drew his first breath in the modern Babylon, within the sound of Bow-bells; for he was born at No. 63, Watling Street, on the 25th of May, in the year 1806. He is, therefore, a genuine Londoner; though his frequent visits to Norfolk, and his connexions in that county, have led many to the impression that he "was raised" in "the land of dumplings." His father was a wholesale druggist in the city, and his mother was originally a Miss Harries, of Cardigan, through whom Mr. Tilbury is related to some leading families in the northern portion of the principality. Mr. Tilbury's parents have both paid the debt of nature; and he is indebted for his education to his uncle, the late Mr. Thomas Tilbury, for many years an eminent solicitor of London, a man respected, and indeed beloved, by all who knew him. This exemplary relative, having no family, adopted the subject of our memoir at a very early age, treating him as a favourite son, and always regarding him with the affectionate solicitude of a parent. He entrusted the education of his young charge, first, to the Rev. Pierre Beau, of Tottenham, afterwards to the talented Mr. John Ramsay, of Muswell Hill, and finally to Mr. W. Gittins, of Highgate.

Even as a school-boy, the dramatic bias of young Tilbury was discernable: the promptings of nature are not to be disregarded; and the lad who has an innate though latent talent for any art, whether for music, painting, sculpture, or the drama, will find some means of following his favourite pursuit; and several of Mr. Tilbury's schoolfellows, now established in our capital, remember the time when, with his coat turned inside out for costume, their young companion raved and ranted as Richard or Shylock, on wet half-holidays, in the dancing-room attached to the school. Parents should carefully observe the tendency of their children's amusements, and foster the feeble shoots of talent they may discern in them: this would lead to a happier condition of society. Chance is too great a regulator of position in the world at present: capacity is seldom thought of in the selection of a profession. Thus, in our parish, we have a stuttering clergyman, who can, with difficulty, read his own sermons, and an eloquent cheesemonger, who delivers speeches on political freedom, and lectures on universal education.

Towards the close of his school-days, Mr. Tilbury lived with his uncle at Highgate, which suburban little town was visited by "a cry of players," under the management of the veteran Jackman. The dramatic yearning which had been, for some time, secretly cherished, now did its work; and the then school-boy, and now long-established comedian, *wriggled* himself behind the scenes. Once there, it became his constant resort: every moment that he could stealthily snatch from home, or from his scholastic duties, was passed in the fascinations of the Theatre Royal (que. Rural) Southwood Lane. We have heard Mr. Tilbury say, that his earliest dramatic remembrance is of *Harlequin and the Silver Swans*, at Covent-Garden; but his next is *The School for Scandal*, and *Don Juan; or a Spectre on Horseback*, at the Highgate temple. From this hour his fate was decided; his resolution was fixed to be an actor: his dreams were dazzled by the tinsel glories of the stage, and peopled with phantom appearances of the great creations of our national poet. Although it was not until some years after that a decided *declaration of principles* took place, yet the laceration of folding door-posts and cornices with forks, to suspend the green-baize table-cloth for a curtain, with the abstraction of sheets and clothes-horses for scenery, and the performance of a monopolological extravaganza, while the family were absent in town, to the no small wonder and delight of the cook, housemaid, and gardener, attested that the spark was only smouldering, and would at length break forth.

Freed from school, Mr. Tilbury was articled to his uncle, and, in due time, admitted as a solicitor; but we presume that his clients were not very numerous; for he soon abandoned his practice, and startled his family by the announcement that he should adopt the stage as a profession, and that he had secretly, for years, been reading Shakspeare and Sheridan, instead of Blackstone and Bayley. During the progress of his clerkship, he had acted at Rawstorne Street, Wilson Street, and other places of, then, amateur practice, where he shared the plaudits with several other now favourite actors then similarly situated; and towards the close of his articles he had represented Flexible, in *Love, Law, and Physic*, at Sadler's Wells Theatre: and with this amount of experience he proceeded to Gosport, and there fulfilled his earliest professional engagement as first low comedian. The theatre was under the management of Messrs. Drouët and Woolgar, the latter the father of the talented actress of that name at the Adelphi. Mr. Tilbury went with the company to Jersey, and afterwards performed in a variety of small towns, where he became acquainted with the deprivations and vicissitudes which an obscure country actor must undergo, and with the meagre houses which await the young beginner. His kind uncle, however, kept him personally from want; and, by his generous supplies, gave him the means of sometimes lending a helping hand to others.

Perhaps he was a little disgusted with the view afforded him of early professional life, for after some time, Mr. Tilbury yielded to the solicitations of his family, and proceeding to London, returned to his legal pursuits. An occasional rub against the scenes was, however, still irresistible; the passion was



MR. TILBURY AS DR. BOTTS,  
AND  
MR. JAMES ROGERS AS SAM.  
IN THE FARCE OF THE POOR RELATION

DR. BOTTS Here's your medicine, Baron  
*(aside)* Don't take it!

SAM Don't you wish it!

*Engraved by Hollis from a Daguerrotype by Mr. Hogg, Strand.  
For Tallis's Drawing Room, Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes*



thus kept alive, and in a few months the chambers were resigned, and he determined on making his reappearance in the theatrical profession.

Mr. Tilbury's intimacy with the late Mr. Yates, procured him an introduction from that gentleman to the late Mr. George Macfarren, who was then about to open the Queen's Theatre, and there Mr. Tilbury made his appearance in the farce of *Everybody's Husband*, in conjunction with late W. Smith, Mr. Munro, Mr. T. Green, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Humby, &c. From thence he went to the Brighton Theatre, then under the management of Messrs. Bew and Vining, and having decided upon changing his line of business, he abandoned low comedy, and eschewing drunken servants and funny rustics, engaged with them for old men, and sustained a great round of characters of that nature during 1831-2. He was then engaged by Mr. Osbaldiston for the Surrey, and succeeded Mr. Williams in his department, where he remained until the theatre closed, when, finding himself without employment, he once more made a virtue of necessity, by acceding to the wishes of his relatives; and quitted the sock and buskin, as he then deemed, for ever. For some time he filled a government appointment, where he hoped to be permanently retained, but the pressure of the affair being answered, and change of principles effecting change of patronage, Mr. Tilbury was doomed to disappointment, and again found himself an idler in the great city.

At this period, Mr. Tilbury met a gentleman who introduced him to the proprietor of the Kensington Theatre (then about to open,) with whom he engaged to conduct the stage department; from here he was invited to join the company at the English Opera House, where, making a hit in *Major Havannah*, in *Before Breakfast*, (a character in which he had some years before, during an engagement at Brighton, elicited the commendation of that distinguished comedian, Charles Mathews, senior,) he was engaged for five years by Mr. Arnold. But it "is not in mortals to command success," and the affairs of the theatre not continuing prosperous, Mr. Tilbury was released from his engagement, to enable him to accept an offer from his old manager, Mr. Osbaldiston, for Covent-Garden, where he remained with that gentleman for two years, and was engaged by Mr. Macready, when he succeeded to the management in the October of 1837. We next find him at the St. James's Theatre, with Mr. Bunn, where he remained for a short season, and then left the metropolis for Liverpool, to assist Messrs. Hammond and Raymond at the Liver; he also appeared at the Theatre Royal, and was highly popular, and much respected there. He next visited Swansea and Bath with Mr. J. R. Newcombe, also Chester and other towns with Mr. Alexander Lee and Mrs. Waylett, the late talented songstress, after which he was engaged by Mr. Webster for the Haymarket, where for nine years he did good "suit and service," gradually rising in public favour, filling the gap left by the late Mr. Strickland, and representing *Hardcastle*, *Polonius*, &c., when Mr. Farren quitted. Arrived at this point, cheered by gradual success, and augmented respect and prosperity, Mr. Tilbury, much to his regret, and equally to the surprise of a large circle of friends and admirers, found his services dispensed with, and the renewal of his engagement declined. After watching events for several months, Mr. Tilbury joined Mr. W. R. Copeland, the respected manager of the Strand Theatre, where his representation of *Doctor Botts* in *The Poor Relation*, and *Don Torribio* in *The Hopeless Passion*, attest the soundness of the engagement. We trust, however, and nowise disloyally to his present manager, soon to see Mr. Tilbury filling a position of more importance, to which his tried abilities, and general commendable deportment entitle him.

His excellent performance of *Cedar*, in Jerrold's comedy of *The Schoolfellow*, first brought Mr. Tilbury into notice, and his personation of Professor Truffles, Sir Toby Belch, Sir Oliver Surface, and Count Muffenough, in *Lola Montes*, with other characters, including many original ones, have creditably sustained the promise his appearance first promised.

Mr. Tilbury is a useful and sterling actor, formed in the old school; always correct, and frequently displaying a broad humour, without ever descending to vulgarity or buffoonery. His pictures of the English gentleman in the decline of life, are natural and easy, vivacious and hearty. His voice is not only distinct and powerful, but rich and unctuous, reminding the listener of good living, and suggesting visions of turtle, venison, and rare old wines. He is of a portly figure, and quiet unassuming manners, and is particularly *still* in his style of street costume. Mr. Charles Mathews, having, some years since, promoted him to the imaginary *See of Kill-tilbury*, he is most commonly addressed and spoken of, among his professional friends, as *the Bishop*—a title according with his appearance, which certainly savours more of a priest, or a dissenting minister, than a comedian.

Some years since Mr. Tilbury received offers to cross the Atlantic, and, indeed, was absolutely engaged by Mr. R. Maywood, for Philadelphia, but the arrangement was ultimately abandoned, in consequence of Mr. Maywood surrendering his position as manager sooner than had been anticipated. A second offer proceeded from Mr. James Wallack, when that gentleman ruled at the National, New York; but the necessity of starting at the short notice of eight days, and the impossibility of completing the necessary arrangements for his family either continuing in England, or accompanying him to the New World, obliged him to forego that advantage also.

Mr. Tilbury is a pleasing companion, good-natured and humorous, and by no means averse to the good things of this life. He has the reputation of being a fluent speaker, and a capital chairman at the social board; and is a member, and on the committee of, the Covent-Garden Theatrical Fund.

Mr. Tilbury married the second daughter of a highly respectable family in Oxford, an amiable lady, by whom he has had five children, but only three now survive.

## MR. JAMES ROGERS.

THIS gentleman, like his friend Tilbury, is a veritable Londoner, and first entered this breathing, bustling world at Barbican, on the 9th of November, 1822. His father having bestowed upon him a sound and useful education, brought him up to his own business, that of an engraver, in which Mr. Rogers acquired great ability, and which he even now occasionally practises, with both profit and distinction. He is also an artist of considerable talent, and the faithfulness of his portraits (mostly hastily pencilled), are universally admitted.

What first induced Mr. Rogers to turn his attention to the stage, we know not, but certain it is, that, a few years since, his graver was almost wholly resigned; and having for some time studied the histrionic art, under the guidance of that excellent comedian, Mr. Oxberry, he obtained an engagement for low comedy at the Olympic Theatre, where he made his first bow to the public, in some subordinate character, in *The Rake's Progress*; appearing afterwards as Paddington Fill, in conjunction with Mr. George Wild, in the farce of *Pork Chops*.

He soon, however, became convinced that an actor's best school was the provinces, and accordingly sought and obtained an engagement at Norwich, where he succeeded the late Mr. Munyard as low comedian; and opened as Jemmy Starling, in Buckstone's popular drama, *The Wreck Ashore*. Here he gradually became a favourite with the play-goers of Norwich; and, in conjunction with the company, visited Lynn and other towns in the circuit.

It has always been our desire to give the theatrical amateur a correct idea of the difficulties to be encountered by him, if, actuated by enthusiasm, he determines on making the stage his profession; and for this purpose we subjoin the following incident in the provincial career of Mr. Rogers. Having been engaged by a Mr. Wilson to perform the low comedy at the Southend Theatre, in 1843, he proceeded to this quiet little town, where he was announced to play Bowbell, in *The Illustrious Stranger*, and two or three other parts beside. The evening came, but the band did not, and as Mr. Rogers is a very respectable performer on the violin, he was induced to fiddle in the orchestra, and play upon the stage alternately during the evening. This double duty merited some little return, but what money was taken, we presume went into the pocket of the manager; for, after having played for a fortnight, and received no salary whatever, Mr. Rogers paid his last five shillings to the owner of a fishing smack, for the permission of travelling with him by night to Gravesend, from whence he made his way again to the metropolis.

Some months of this year were also passed in making a pleasant tour with the late lamented Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Lee. He again returned to the metropolis, and played with Mr. G. Wild, in the broadly-amusing farce of *The Artful Dodge*, and then proceeded to the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, where his performance of Gruel, in Webb's drama of *The Secretary*, and other parts, brought him into highly favourable notice.

We next find him at the City of London, where he played second low comedy parts to Mr. George Wild; and afterwards at the Pavilion Theatre, at which house he opened as William Small, in an original farce, entitled *Coming of Age*; and continuing to play the principal low comedy business, became a decided favourite with the eastern playgoers towards the close of the year 1850.

At present, he is a member of Mr. Copeland's company at Punch's Playhouse, lately the New Strand, where he has made the most of every opportunity afforded him of exciting the risibility of her Majesty's lieges. The succession of novelties which have been produced at this little theatre, have given Mr. Rogers scope for the exercise of his original talent; and in *Glass Houses*, *Kensington Gardens*, *Poor Relations*, *My Wife's Future Husband*, *The Shot Tower*, *The Lady Godiva*, and Mr. Stirling's farce of *The Bloomer Costume*, he has had a variety of excellent parts, to all of which he has paid great attention, and won much commendation by the opposite characteristics of his performances. His representation of Nobby Nick, the showman, in *The Bloomer Costume*, is a rare bit of truthful delineation, occasionally heightened by some of those happy spontaneities for which our little friend is remarkable.

His *make-up* is always first-rate; and if any fault can be found with Mr. Rogers, as an actor, it is that he sometimes evinces a proneness to high colouring and caricature: but this he now appears to be subduing; and we think we may venture to say, that if he steadily pursues his profession, observing carefully, and studying industriously, that he may some day occupy a prominent rank among the comedians of the metropolis.

Mr. Rogers is married, and is also the father of a charming pigeon's pair—a son and a daughter. He is a cheerful companion, a quiet, unassuming man, and a general favourite among his friends and acquaintances.







Engraved by Hollis from a French vignette by Mayall  
 for Tullis's Drawing Room Table Book, & Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, & Anecdotes



## MR. GUSTAVUS VASA BROOKE.

WE class this gentleman as our most distinguished provincial tragedian, for although he has fulfilled several engagements at the minor metropolitan theatres, yet he has certainly not succeeded in establishing himself with the London public; we do not lay this to his want of dramatic talent, for we willingly admit that he possesses something far greater than talent, even genius in this direction; but to a certain inaptitude for business, and inattention to the usual customs of society, the effect of which, in retarding his prosperity, have been strikingly evident.

Mr. G. V. Brooke was born on the 25th of April, 1818, at Hardwick-place, Dublin; where his father was a gentleman of independent property. When very young, Master Brooke was sent to Edgeworth's-town school, then conducted by a brother of Miss Edgeworth, the distinguished novelist. Even here he gave evidence of his dramatic talent by winning most of the prizes for English declamation. On leaving school he was placed under the direction of the Rev. William Jones, to whom was confided the task of preparing him for college, as his father intended to have him educated for the Irish bar. But a different destiny awaited him; when about fifteen years of age he paid his first visit to the Theatre Royal, in Dublin, where the performance made so great an impression upon his susceptible imagination, that he at once resolved upon adopting the stage as a profession. "Thought and done," appears to have been his motto, for the next morning he absolutely waited upon Mr. Calcraft (then, as now, the manager of the theatre), and startled that gentleman with a request to permit him to appear at his theatre, in the character of William Tell. Those only who are acquainted with theatrical life, and the difficulty which men of acknowledged talent often experience in obtaining a suitable opportunity for the display of their ability, can guess the astonishment of the worthy manager. A tall youth of fifteen, without any experience in the dramatic art, desiring to make his first appearance in a principal character, in the first theatre of the Irish metropolis, had in it, at first, an air of absurdity, and the probability was that the ambitious young aspirant would have been dismissed with a smile at his presumption. But young Brooke's bearing was singularly manly and gentlemanly, something in his manner attracted the notice of the manager, who was at length induced to hear him recite the well known extract from *William Tell*, usually called "Tell's address to his native mountains." This he delivered with such grace of action, and power of elocution, that Mr. Calcraft could not withhold an expression of approval, but that was the only result of the interview.

About this period Edmund Kean was announced to appear in Dublin, but was prevented from doing so by serious illness; what was to be done? suddenly the manager thought of his young visitor; an Irish audience are easily taken by novelty, still it was a perilous experiment; no matter, it should be tried, and Mr. Brooke was accordingly announced, and made his appearance on Easter Tuesday, 1833; in his coveted character of William Tell. That the performance was full of faults may very naturally be expected, and the only wonder is, that under such circumstances, it was not a total and irredeemable failure; but this was by no means the case, he evinced considerable histrionic talent, and high hopes were entertained of his ultimate distinction. An engagement was the result of this effort, and he successively appeared in *Virginius*, Frederick in *Lover's Vows*, *Douglas*, *Rolla*, &c. His education in the histrionic art now commenced in earnest, and he laboured assiduously at it for several years, during which time he performed leading Shakspearean characters at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, Yarmouth, Cambridge, Bury St. Edmund's, Belfast, Cork, and indeed at most of our leading provincial theatres.

But it was not for his tragic powers alone that Mr. Brooke acquired a provincial reputation, he was an excellent light comedian and a humorous representative of Irish peculiarities. Indeed, remarkable as it may appear to those who have only heard Mr. Brooke's fine voice upon the stage, so utterly free from even the slightest provincialism or peculiarity, he has a very decided touch of his native brogue when engaged in private conversation.

Mr. Brooke's reputation at length reached the metropolis, and several offers were made him for the London theatres, which it appears were not sufficiently attractive to allure him from his provincial admirers. At length he accepted an offer from Mr. Macready, when that gentleman became the manager of Drury Lane in 1840; it was stated at the time that Mr. Brooke on finding himself cast to play Laertes to Macready's Hamlet, immediately wrote to the manager, saying, that he was only in the habit of performing one part in the play, and that was Hamlet, and that Mr. Macready might play the Ghost if he choose. This statement is very far from being a correct one, the opening play was *The Merchant of Venice*, and Mr. Brooke, who had been engaged to share the second business, or "juvenile tragedy," with Mr. Anderson, was announced for the insignificant character of *Salarino*! He immediately declined complying with this ungenerous arrangement, and an action was entered against him for breach of engagement, but it was withdrawn on his writing to Mr. Macready, that unless proceedings were abandoned, he must publish the whole correspondence in self-defence.

Some years passed by and Mr. Brooke still remained a provincial actor, but at length he accepted an engagement from the management of the Olympic Theatre, where he made his first metropolitan

appearance as Othello, on the third of January, 1848. We were present upon that occasion, the house was crowded by an expectant audience, among whom were many distinguished members of the press, and also of the dramatic profession. Mr. Brooke's first appearance was hailed with a shout of vehement applause, his bold and majestic figure was singularly striking, but after this he proceeded almost in silence, the audience appeared to be disappointed in the actor concerning whom fame had blown so loud a blast upon her trumpet; this was evidenced by an increasing inattention on their part, conversation going on in various parts of the house so loud as to seriously interrupt the performance. At length, at the commencement of the great scene in the third act, the stage manager entered and begged their attention for the *debütant*; they were, he said, not doing justice to Mr. Brooke, or acting with their accustomed generosity; the rebuke was taken in good part, and a loud cheer was given to reassure the insulted actor. During this Mr. Brooke had retired to a couch at the back of the stage, where he sat, seemingly overcome, and with his eyes bent upon the ground. Slowly raising his head, he gave the audience a look so dejected and appealing, that universal sympathy was enlisted on his behalf, and a hearty shout of applause was followed by profound silence. The scene proceeded until he came to the lines—

“If thou’dst slander her and torture me,  
Never pray more.”

We never listened to anything more fearful in its racking sublimity of passion, a simultaneous emotion ran through the house like an electric shock; the whole audience rose and greeted the actor with loud and repeated cheers; he had fired them with enthusiastic excitement, and from that moment was acknowledged as one of the greatest tragedians of the day. On leaving the theatre, we heard a gentleman exclaim excitedly to another—“Well, what do you think of him?” “*Great, but not perfect*,” was the pithy and truthful reply. The newspapers of the following day were, however, unanimous in their congratulations, and many compared his success with that of Edmund Kean in 1814.

Mr. Brooke sustained a large round of the principal characters in tragedy, during his engagement at the Olympic, and while there received an offer from Mr. Webster for the Haymarket Theatre. Fortune now seemed disposed to strew his path with roses, a brilliant opportunity was before him, and he might have become the most distinguished tragedian of the age, but with a singular indifference to his own interest, and from some motive incomprehensible, we believe, even to his most immediate friends, he declined the liberal offer of £15 *per night* for one hundred nights certain. Nor was the pecuniary loss to him, in this eccentric proceeding, his only one; an engagement for that period at the Haymarket would have thoroughly established him in the public favour, and placed him in a position more lofty and distinguished than that which he now occupies.

Since that period Mr. Brooke has, with the exception of an engagement he fulfilled at the Marylebone Theatre and another at the Olympic (under the management of Mr. Farren), again devoted himself to the provinces, and he is now about to depart to the shores of America, where he will no doubt produce an extraordinary sensation among the acute and appreciative citizens of the new world.

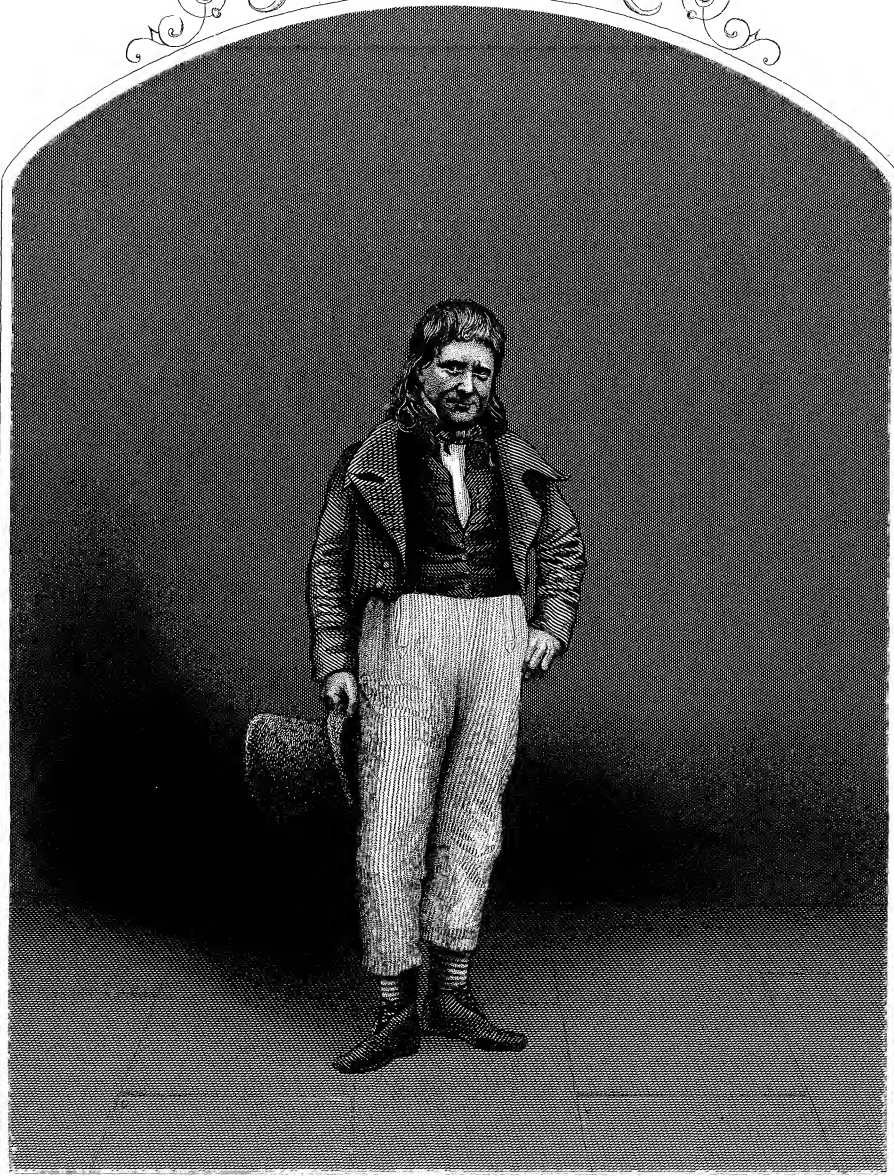
Mr. Brooke is indisputably a tragedian of the highest rank, nature has showered down her gifts upon him with an unsparing hand; to a tall, manly, and singularly graceful figure, is added a countenance strikingly handsome and expressive; his carriage is bold and majestic, and his whole appearance classical and statuesque. His voice is a deep chest voice, full and sonorous, but with something of a nasal tone, it has been much injured by that irritating and painful disorder of the throat, *bronchitis*, aggravated by occasional dissipation, but, we believe, it is now perfectly restored to its original power and beauty.

Mr. Brooke's performance of Othello has been lauded as his most perfect and finished effort; but we cannot altogether acquiesce in this opinion. By many of his provincial admirers, his Iago is considered a still more perfect and original performance; in it he endeavours to show that Iago acts, not from a native fiendishness, and a sordid hope of advancement, but from a deeply grafted feeling of revenge for domestic wrongs, which he believes the Moor has inflicted upon him, and which he resolves to pursue till he is even with him, wife for wife.

We merely record this conception, and do not coincide in it: Mr. Brooke is probably in this, as in some points in his version of Hamlet, elaborately wrong; but the extreme of originality is not a common error, merely the fault of an overactive imagination; and whatever conception Mr. Brooke adheres to, he executes with such natural colouring and artistic finish that renders it highly probable and effective.

Mr. Brooke's Hamlet is princely and natural, but he makes the woe-stricken distraught prince too attentive to his personal appearance, he is a model to the sculptor, the Apollo Belvidere in a suit of black velvet, with every bow and ribbon carefully arranged; though his death-scene is grand, the corrosive poison seems to burn him up, and his throat and mouth are parched with a thirst which never can be slacked. But his finest effort, in our estimation, is his Sir Giles Overreach, the concluding scene is terrific, absolutely awful in its intensity; he looks like some fiend struck by the avenging thunderbolt in the very moment of triumph. But we must draw these remarks to a close, our space will not permit us to enter into that analysis of his various performances which would doubtless be as interesting to our readers as it is engrossing to ourselves.





MR. JOSH. SILSBEE as JONATHAN PLOUGHBOY

IN SAMUEL WOODWORTH'S  
COMIC DRAMA OF 'THE FOREST ROSE'

BLANDEFORD "Are you a shop-keeper?"

JONATHAN "Wal, yees, I guess maybe I  
would come under that head; for I sells  
everything in created nater, and a  
darn'd sight more tue."

Act 1 Sc. 3

Engraved by J. Moore, from a Daguerreotype by W. M. M. M.  
For Tallis's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs and Anecdotes

## MR. JOSHUA SILSBEE.

THERE is, perhaps, scarcely a man, woman, or child in any considerable city in America that is not familiar with the name of Silsbee, the Yankee comedian: from north to south, like Shakspeare's Yorick, he has the reputation of being "a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy," and is spoken of as a mad wag, full of fun and anecdote—sparkling with wit, beaming with humour, and possessing "a heart as large as all out of doors." His recent highly successful *débat* at the Adelphi, where he has been attracting crowded houses, has awakened curiosity respecting him on this side of the Atlantic; and we proceed accordingly to place the following brief sketch of his career before our readers.

Mr. Joshua S. Silsbee was born at Stenben County, New York, December 1, 1813. His early life was, we believe, not distinguished by anything very remarkable: we presume he was whipped at school, and petted at home, like most little boys, whether in England or America. In process of time he, as all of Yankee stock do, travelled west; "to seek his 'tarnal fortin;" and, after a variety of adventures incident upon such a rambling mode of life, he settled for a time at Natchez, Mississippi. We are not aware what circumstance kindled the dramatic fire in the breast of young Silsbee; but here he took it into his head to go upon the stage, hoping and believing that he would ultimately eclipse the reputation of Kemble, Cooke, Kean, &c., and become, what every young American actor believes he will, *the* tragedian of his country. He very properly commenced at the bottom of the ladder, and determined, as our transatlantic neighbours say, "to work his way up to glory, and a pocket full of rocks."

He made his first appearance in the winter of 1838, under the management of the eccentric Charles B. Parsons, now an eminent, and we doubt not very pious divine, but at that time a theatrical manager. The character in which Mr. Silsbee made his first essay was doubtless not a very important one, as he was engaged for what is technically called "general utility," that is, to perform those unimportant characters which actors of any pretensions deem beneath their notice—to represent servants, soldiers, villagers, or messengers; or even to carry on a banner at the head of a troop of supernumeraries.

During the early time of his noviciate, Mr. Silsbee was, on one occasion, very near playing a more tragic part than he had dreamed of even in his loftiest aspirations. He was cast for the Spanish ruffian, Davilla, in *Pizarro*, in which character it is his business to stab Orazembo, an aged Peruvian prisoner, and thus give the latter, in his dying moments, an opportunity to make a very moral and edifying speech. In his flurry and confusion—for the part was new to him, and he was impressed with a due sense of its importance—his knife slipped, and he actually did stab Jemmy Thorne, who played Orazembo, directly in the back. The wound inflicted was not very severe, but it frightened both parties: Silsbee, not unnaturally, forgot the precise words of his part; and instead of exclaiming—"Death and vengeance seize the whole Peruvian race!" roared out—"Death and vengeance seize the whole *human* race!" This benevolent denunciation sent the audience into a broad guffaw, which, when Thorne cried out, in an agony of fear—"I'm a murdered man—take me off," increased to a perfect explosion. The wound fortunately turned out to be only a slight one; but Thorne never would play the part again to Silsbee's Davilla.

Mr. Silsbee next went to Cincinnati, where he was engaged for fops and juvenile business, not then having quite so robust a figure, or so humorous a countenance as at present, but being suitably thin and genteel-looking. From thence he "circulated himself" throughout the west, where he was usually considered a very useful member of the companies to which he was attached, but still he gave no promise of any very brilliant success.

Our most distinguished comedians have usually been indebted to some trifling event, for the proper direction of their talents, so also was it with Mr. Silsbee, for, at a complimentary benefit to the late J. M. Scott, given at Cincinnati in 1840, to add to the attractions of the entertainment, he volunteered to tell a Yankee story. His offer was accepted, although no great expectations were entertained of his success, but to the astonishment of the company, and even of himself, he created an extraordinary sensation. The humour and originality of his manner, his quaint racy style, and ludicrously faithful vernacular, surprised the house into general and enthusiastic approval, and roars of laughter and applause, testified the triumph of the young actor. The next morning, the press confirmed the favourable opinion expressed by the audience, and that in so warm and unqualified a manner, that the manager turned his attention to giving a fair scope for the display of the hitherto latent talent displayed by the young actor, and reproduced the little drama of *The Forest Rose and the Yankee Ploughboy* expressly for him. This revival brought overflowing houses for four weeks, an amount of success very remarkable for an old piece, the principal character of which was in the hands of a comparative novice.

Mr. Silsbee then purchased the copyright of two or three Yankee pieces, and proceeded to Philadelphia, where he opened in 1841, and played with the celebrated comedian Dinneford, with very favourable results. He then fulfilled a starring engagement at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, and in 1842, he played another highly successful engagement there, shortly before the theatre was converted into a church. His reception was highly flattering, and Mr. Silsbee probably felt it the more so, from the fact that he appeared, together with the late distinguished comedian, Yankee Hill, whose reputation



was then at its zenith, and it is said, so far overshadowed his talented rival, that the latter withdrew before the termination of his engagement.

We next find Mr. Silsbee at the National, under the management of Mr. Pelby, where he met the same success and liberal patronage which had hitherto followed his footsteps. Since that period his career has been unchequered by vicissitudes, and uninterrupted by any of those events, which, although they may render the life of an actor interesting to the reader of his biography, often make it exceedingly trying to himself. Mr. Silsbee has occasionally been tempted into theatrical management, which we believe he has judiciously relinquished; after a fair trial.

The death of both Hill and Marble, the only comedians who had previously devoted their talents to the illustration of Yankee characteristics, has left Silsbee without a rival in his peculiar walk of the drama; but he would probably have gained the same amount of popularity, had they still remained upon the great stage of life, as his style of acting differs considerably from either of theirs, and is, indeed, so far peculiar, that it may be said to form a new and original school. Faithfully as he portrays the Yankee character, still his performances are permeated with the natural humour of the man. His looks, gesture, and action—even the arch twinkle of his eye—impress the spectator with ludicrous emotions, and his inflexible countenance, rigidly innocent of fun, while his audience are in roars of laughter, gives an additional zest to the humour of the language and the absurdity of the situations.

Mr. Silsbee is said to be an excellent actor off the stage, and has perpetrated many an innocent and amusing deception in private life; he is excellent company—indeed, the very soul of a social party—a keen observer of the foibles and singularities of his fellow creatures, and has an inexhaustible budget of odd stories picked up in his travels, and which he dresses and colours with singular dexterity. The following anecdote of Mr. Silsbee's visit to the Tower, since his stay in the metropolis, exhibits his native fun and high spirits. A pompous little man was showing the cannon to the visitors. "This piece," said he, "was from Waterloo. Lord, how we did beat 'em there! This is from Badajos; this is from so and so;" &c. Mr. Silsbee, seeing the little guide was highly diverted with relating the exploits of his country, thought he would "bring him to anchor a little," as the sailors say, and therefore began looking about in a very careful and enquiring manner. "What are you looking for," said the guide; "we've got trophies from all nations." "Have you, indeed?" said Silsbee, carelessly: "I wasn't looking for the French trophies, nor the Spanish." "Perhaps it's the Chinese?" said the guide. "No; nor the Chinese," continued Silsbee; "but where's all that was captured from the Americans, eh?" "Ah! grunted the guide, looking rather blank, "the Americans—yes—from the Americans, you mean?" "Yes," returned Silsbee, "I heard you took a good deal at Bunker's Hill, and Bennington, and Trenton, and those places." "So we did," replied the guide, "but it was such old stuff that we didn't care about bringing it home." At this moment a thought struck him, and feeling that he had evidently been "smoked," he became rather quiet, and presently whispered in Silsbee's ear that he was a Yankee. "I'm nothing else, sir," said the sportive comedian: "and as for that old stuff you took at Yorktown, I'll tell them to send it over to you, when I get home again."

He has been engaged by Mr. Webster for the Adelphi and Haymarket theatres, and will probably appear in most of his important characters during his stay in this country. His Jonathan Ploughboy is a "green specimen" of the Yankee, a downright rustic, whose natural shrewdness and ingenuity are mingled with country awkwardness and simplicity, and forms a great contrast to his representation of the fast, go-a-head American, Lott Sap Sago, in the drama of *Yankee Land*, or to his great part of Sam Slick, in *The Clockmaker*, adapted from Judge Haliburton's acute and humorous work. Among his favourite pieces we may also include Mr. Bayle Bernard's interesting petite comedies of *A Wife for a Day*, *The Yankee Pedlar*, and *New Notions*, with Stirling Coyne's comedy of *Seth Slope*, &c.

It would be premature, at present, to enter into any critical investigation of Mr. Silsbee's talents as a comedian—our knowledge of them is too scanty, and our acquaintance too brief; as it would be unjust to condemn a foreign artist for a comparatively feeble effort, before an audience to whom he was a stranger; so, on the other hand, it would betray a giddiness and superficiality of criticism, to proclaim him a great actor, because he had been successful in a single character. Public opinion has, however, so far, declared for Mr. Silsbee; he has already shaken hands with his audiences, and is on capital terms with them, and we think we may fairly say, that his peculiar talents will be even more keenly appreciated, when they become more familiarly known. If asked to name Mr. Silsbee's imperfections, we should say that they are comprised in this one—an occasional indistinctness in utterance, possibly arising from the provincialisms and peculiarities of the dialect in which he clothes his whimsicalities. "Yeou git eout!" and "Hello! 'taint no euse o' your scrugin, 'taint;" and similar phraseology, though exceedingly humorous, and, no doubt, perfectly truthful, perhaps interfere with that clearness of articulation which we look for upon the stage. Still, we believe Mr. Silsbee to be an admirable and highly original comedian, and we wish him that success in this country which he has hitherto enjoyed in his own; and which the American people so liberally bestow upon such of our English actors as court their judgment and solicit their approbation.







MR. EMERY AS ROBIN ROUGHHEAD.  
IN  
FORTUNE'S FROLICS.

"What! you mean 'lurd Harry I suppose! Ecod! you'd better not be too funny wi' him or he'll play t'very devil w' you!"

Act 1 Sc 2

Engraved by J. Sandbach. From a Daguerrotype by Mayall.  
For Talbot's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs and Anecdotes

## MR. EMERY.

THE son of a distinguished comedian, and the grandson of a man more than respectable in the Thespian ranks, this gentleman may be said to be an actor by birthright; and although talent is by no means an heirloom, and certain of transmission from one generation to the next, still, the subject of this memoir bids fair ultimately to succeed to that honourable position in the profession which was filled by his father.

Mr. Emery was born on the 10th of September, 1817, in Hyde-street, Bloomsbury, being the youngest but one of a family of seven. He was educated at Bridport Hall, Edmonton, the proprietor of which school, (at that period) the late W. Fitch, was also lessee of the City Theatre, Milton-street; which he, in conjunction with another party, had converted from a chapel into a theatre, but which has since been restored to the purpose for which it was originally intended. Among some of the more favoured boys, young Emery was, on one occasion, permitted to *walk* from Edmonton to town, to witness the performance of *John Bull*, after which treat they again walked back to school, under the charge of the head-master, Dr. Burgin. To this visit does Mr. Emery attribute his inoculation with the dramatic virus, for this performance at an obscure minor theatre aroused in him a love for the histrionic profession which has never left him.

On leaving school he was placed with an uncle, the late Mr. John Thompson, a merchant in the Irish provision trade, well known on the "Irish Walk;" but disliking the processes of "tasting" Irish butters, and inspecting tierces of *Mess Pork* and *India Beef*, he varied the scene by becoming clerk to a well known member of the Stock Exchange, and, for the second time in his life, he became acquainted with the mysteries of *waddling*. Although he found the *Bulls* and the *Bears* but rough acquaintances, he, nevertheless, sought to cultivate a farther intimacy with them, under the auspices of another employer, who rejoiced in the soubriquet of the "English nobleman," but a mutual feeling of dislike springing up between them, the following trifling incident led to their separation. Those who are initiated in the mysteries of the Stock Exchange are aware that pieces of square blank paper, stock receipts, &c., are hung about for the convenience of the members. These pieces of paper young Emery frequently transferred to the office of his employer, where, with the aid of blue, red, and black inks, he converted them into scenes, on which, in idle moments, he used to feast his eyes and gratify his histrionic fancies. On one occasion, when entering the office with a bundle of Dutch bonds, he found his venerable magister working himself into a phrenzy over the hoard of Lilliputian scenes, which, by some accident, he had discovered. "What are these?" was the enquiry, in a tone of awful sternness; to this question there was but one reply, and Emery confessed that they were the amusements of his idle hours. "Ah!" answered his senior, with a portentous grunt; "what's bred in the bone—hum; better try something more suited to your abilities." Stung by this allusion to a profession in which his father had gained a great and honourable name, Emery replied, that if his employer chose to hand him a cheque for a quarter's salary, due the next day, he would at once relieve the autocrat of his presence. The old gentleman took him at his word, and our young adventurer transferred his services to the house of a well-known jeweller and goldsmith; but as the principals were compelled, shortly after, to open accounts with a learned commissioner near Basinghall-street, he was again compelled to seek some new occupation, when a gentleman to whom he had imparted his desire of seeking a livelihood upon the stage, interested himself in his behalf, and on one eventful Saturday, sent to him to know whether he was prepared to play his father's part of Dan, in *John Bull*; he joyfully said he would be, and on the following Monday, in the May of 1834, he made his first appearance at the Queen's Theatre, in the Tottenham Court-road. We presume that he succeeded tolerably well, for the manager offered him an engagement, and the next week, under the assumed name of Anderson, he appeared as Robin Roughhead.

Mr. Downe, the late respected manager of the York circuit, having seen the young *debutant*, engaged him to open in Hull in the ensuing winter season, and he accordingly appeared there as Robin Roughhead, as he felt himself a little seasoned in the part. The next day he was sent for by the manager, at the door of whose *sanctum* Mr. Emery appeared, big with expectation that he was about to compliment him on his performance of the previous night. This illusion was speedily dissipated, for Mr. Downe thus addressed him:—"Well, young man, I saw you last night; *but you are not worth your salt, sir!* If you like to remain with me, I'll give you fifteen shillings a-week. I have arranged that you shall board and lodge in my house for twelve shillings, so you will have three shillings per week for pocket-money. It will cost more trouble than you are worth, to lick you into shape; but, for your father's sake, I'll undertake the task."

Mr. Emery's love of the profession was stronger than his mortified pride, and he remained, and was made to deliver messages, and appear in groups, as third officer, fourth monk, &c., and was occasionally entrusted with bandits, with two lines to utter. Great was his joy on one occasion, at finding himself cast for the Bleeding Captain in *Macbeth*. He got the words into his head; but from an over

anxiety and excitement, when he went on the stage they deserted him: and when he came to the line—"Like two spent swimmers that do choke their art," his art was choked, and, to use a technical term, "he stuck dead." He was again reduced to the ranks; but feeling that he had "that within" which Mr. Downe had failed to discover, he resolved to try some more removed ground, and joined the Edinburgh *corps*, under the management of Mr. Murray, in the summer of 1835. Being cast a part which he conceived was not his duty to play, he refused it, and this refusal led to his secession from the theatre. He next joined a small sharing company in Falkirk, with which he proceeded to numberless small towns; and in Dunfermline first met with his friend, Mr. Gustavus Brooke. At length, after encountering the usual vicissitudes attendant upon sharing schemes, Mr. Emery became located at Liverpool; and, for several years, followed his profession in Manchester, Chester, and the towns in their vicinity.

At length he obtained a metropolitan engagement, and appeared at the Lyceum, on the 18th of April, 1843, in the singularly opposite characters of Giles, in *The Miller's Maid*, and Lovegold, in *The Miser*, with decided success. It is, perhaps, worthy of remark, that his father, on his first appearance in London, forty-five years before, at Covent-Garden, had chosen characters of a similarly varied nature, playing Frank Oatlands, and also concluding with Lovegold.

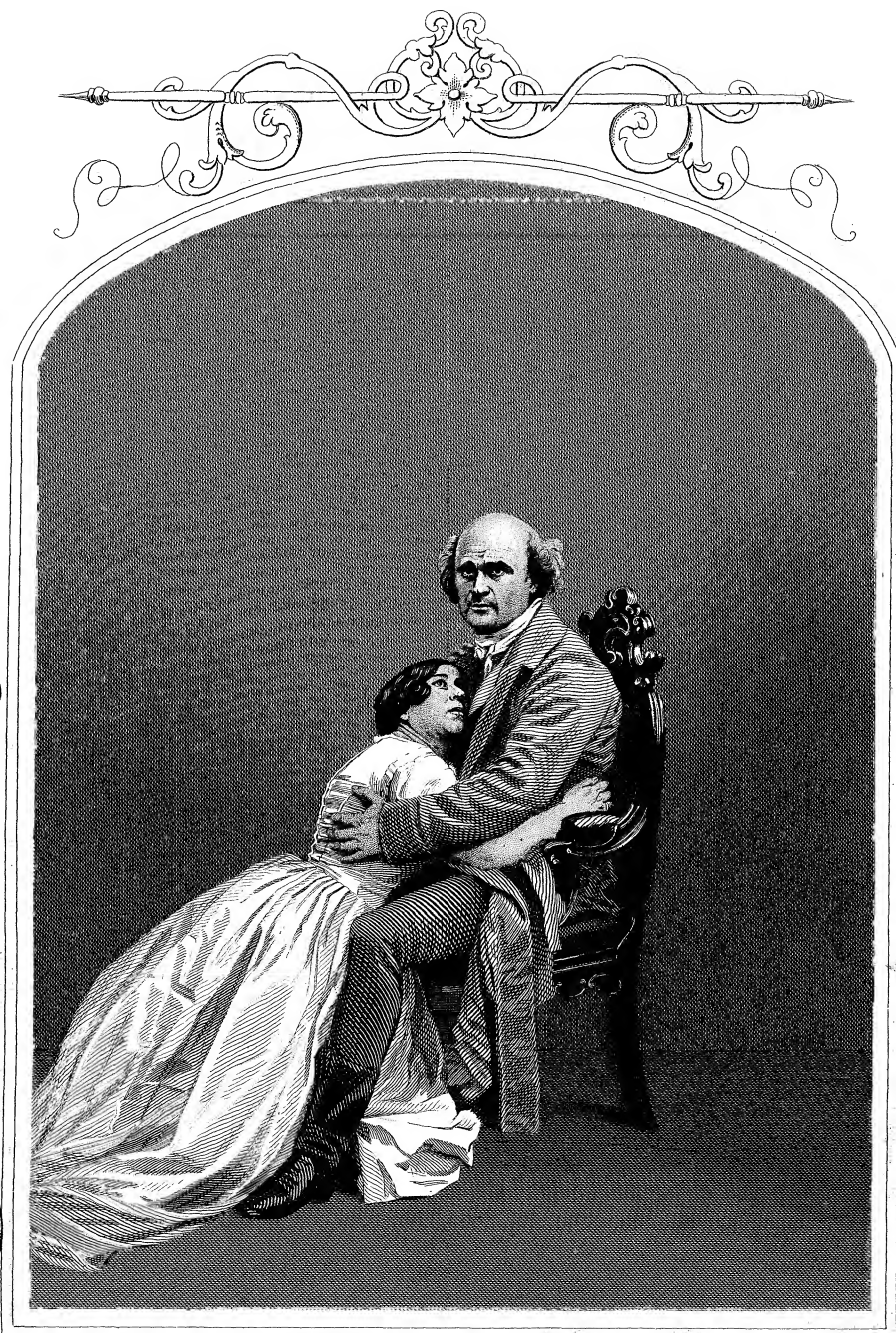
Mr. Emery's stay at the Lyceum proved but a brief one; for the heat of the summer was such, that the theatre closed after a very short season.

He was next engaged by Mr. Henry Wallack for Covent-Garden, for three years, and made his first appearance there on the 19th of October, 1843, as Fixture, in *A Rowland for an Oliver*. Wallack's brief career is too well known to need comment; but an incident occurred on the night of his benefit which is worth relating. The carpenters had all struck for arrears of salary, and the "flymen" had refused to draw up the curtain: Miss Kelly, who was ready dressed for the stage, became impatient, and requested Mr. Emery to ascertain the cause of the delay. On hearing it, Miss Kelly consented to act in front of the curtain; and Mr. Wallack, having manfully made the audience acquainted with the true state of the case, the piece was actually proceeding in this manner, when Emery determined to frustrate the malicious conduct of the carpenters. He climbed to the "flies," accompanied by the well-known Dr. B., where, having found a spare winch which fitted to the curtain barrel, they hove up the curtain, to the astonishment of the actors, and amidst the applause of the audience; and as the scene was set behind, the piece proceeded smoothly enough. Mr. Emery and his friend returned to the green-room; and, after some time had elapsed, a grey-headed old man came to the door, and beckoning him out, said—"Sir, I knew your father: I worked in this theatre thirty years ago; and I can't see his son come to harm. When you go out—and don't go till all is over—go by the curtain, and through the passage by the ladies' dressing-rooms—*don't cross the stage*; for they have unshored all the traps, and you and your friend will break your necks if you fall through one." Mr. Emery thanked the old man for his advice, and took it, or he might probably never have lived to tell the tale.

In 1844, he was engaged for the Lyceum by the Keeleys, whose prosperous management there for several years, was the theme of general conversation in theatrical circles. Many of our readers will doubtless recollect his admirable personations of Jonas Chuzzlewit, of Will Fern, in *The Chimes*; Perrybingle, in *The Cricket on the Hearth*; the Creole, and many other characters, in which he proved his dramatic talent to be of a highly original and powerful character. When the Keeleys withdrew, Mr. Emery assumed the reins of management on behalf of Mr. Levi, and kept the theatre open through a broiling summer, for a period of ten weeks. He afterwards joined Mr. Leigh Murray at the Olympic, and remained with him to the end of his term; he then became stage-manager for Mr. Shepherd, of the Surrey Theatre, with whom he stayed a twelvemonth, and transferred his services, in 1850, to Drury-Lane, under the management of Mr. Anderson. In the autumn, he fulfilled several starring engagements, appearing with brilliant success at the Theatres Royal, Leeds, Hull, Liverpool, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, &c., and reopened at Drury-Lane in the winter. There he played a remarkably varied and extensive round of characters, embracing Dandie Dinmont, Silky, Baillie Nicol Jarvie, Autolycus, Touchstone, Menenius, the Grave-digger, Miramont in *The Elder Brother*; Hassan, in Planché's translation of *Fiesco*; Sam, in *Raising the Wind*; Major Stock, in Sullivan's new comedy of *The Old Love and the New*; Wormwood; Harrop, in *Mary the Maid of the Inn*; Crack, in *The Turnpike Gate*; Gibbie, in *The Wonder*; Sam Sharpset, in *The Slave*; Walter, in *The Children in the Wood*, and many others. He is now under a three-years' engagement to Mr. Webster, of the Haymarket and Adelphi Theatres, and appeared at the latter house in the March of the present year, and remains a much respected member of the powerful company assembled within its walls.

Mr. Emery is a graphic and romantic actor, admirable in eccentricities and character parts, a highly legitimate and amusing comic performer, and a powerful serious one. He makes a most artistic use of a bold and manly appearance; his skill in making up for a part is very great; and his Will Fern, Harrop, &c., are absolute pictures. His rustic delineations are very natural, especially those of the rougher cast; and we should much like to see him in his father's great character of Robert Tyke. His voice, though high, is clear and powerful, and his action natural and picturesque. He is a man of strong intelligence, an excellent companion, and much respected by his professional brethren.





MR. ALFRED WIGAN AS MONSIEUR TOURBILLON  
AND  
MRS. WIGAN AS VIRGINIE.  
IN THE PETITE COMEDY OF "TO PARENTS & GUARDIANS"  
VIRGINIE Mon pere !  
M. TOURBILLON Ma fille !

*Engraved by Hollis from a Daguerriotype by Mayall.  
For Tallis's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs, and Anecdotes*

## MR. AND MRS. ALFRED WIGAN.

MR. WIGAN is descended from an ancient Lancashire family, the name of which was originally *Wogan*, but, in consequence of some political troubles in which they were involved, was altered to its present form. The name of one of his ancestors is appended to the death-warrant of Charles the First, though, at a later period, the family were attached to the Stuart cause; for that Captain Wogan, who suffered as a Jacobite, and whose memory is cherished by Scott's heroine in *Waverly*, Flora Mac Ivor, is also an ancestor of the present actor, not in political, but histrionic circles.

Mr. Alfred Wigan was born in 1818, and his family being in opulent circumstances, it was intended he should sail smoothly over the billows of life, unvexed by the usual toils and cares of existence; but circumstances rendering the choice of a profession necessary, he chose the stage, as according more readily with his own taste and inclination than many other less romantic, though usually more profitable occupations.

Accordingly Mr. Wigan made his first professional appearance on the opening of the St. James's Theatre, in John Hullah's opera of *The Village Coquettes*, the words of which were written by Mr. Charles Dickens. His early career is unmarked by the usual vicissitudes of an actor's life, his first appearance in the metropolis being sufficiently successful and fortunate to enable him to remain in it; for we find that his next engagement was with Madame Vestris, when that lady opened Covent-Garden Theatre in 1840, where he appeared as Monsieur Blague, in Jerrold's play of *Gertrude's Cherries*, in which he obtained very favourable notice. He was also highly successful in a piece by Mark Lemon, called *The Turf*, in which he represented an English swindler assuming to be a Frenchman. During the season also he played Lord Allcash, in *Fra Diavolo*, and sang all the music, having only undertaken the part the same morning.

On the 5th of August, 1839, Mr. Wigan formed a matrimonial alliance with Miss Pincott, a niece of Mr. James Wallack, and a lady favourably known at the metropolitan theatres for her sprightly and pleasing performance of chambermaids and other comedy parts: she has since addressed herself principally to Frenchwomen, which she represents with great *naïveté* and truthfulness.

Mr. Wigan remained at Covent-Garden under the management of Charles Kemble, and also that of Mr. Bunn, playing an extensive round of characters, including eccentrics, Irishmen, and Frenchmen. During the latter part of Mr. Macready's management at Drury-Lane, in the May of 1843, that gentleman sent for Mr. and Mrs. Wigan. He was then producing *The School for Scandal*, with a great and peculiar cast, and desired Mr. Wigan's services for Trip; Mrs. Wigan appearing as Maria.

They next played conjointly at the Strand, when under the management of Mr. Maywood, of America, from whence Mrs. Wigan was engaged for Drury-Lane, by Mr. Bunn, as a farce actress, while her husband joined Henry Wallack for a short time at Covent-Garden. A few provincial engagements followed, after which they were both retained for the Lyceum, when the Keeleys opened that house on the 8th of April, in 1844. To this period of his career is Mr. Wigan much indebted, as the many excellent original characters which he sustained during the three years he remained under that management tended to the perfect establishment of his reputation with the public as an actor of great and highly original powers. The following pieces from the pen of Mr. Wigan were also produced here during his engagement, viz., *Watch and Ward*, *A Model of a Wife*, *Luck's All*, *The Loan of a Wife*, *Next Door*, and *Five Hundred Pounds Reward*.

In the September of 1847, Mr. and Mrs. Wigan were engaged for the Haymarket, where he performed the chief eccentrics. During the first vacation he played for a short time at the Olympic, and afterwards starred at the Surrey as Monsieur Jaques, and in some of his own pieces, Mrs. Wigan playing with him. On the re-opening of the Haymarket he returned to that theatre; but some little disagreements arising between him and Mr. Webster, the engagement was cancelled by mutual consent.

Mr. Wigan, after starring at Bath and Bristol, was engaged by Mr. Maddox for the Princess's, where he appeared on the 26th of December, 1849, in a new piece, called *The First Night*, which ran for nearly three months. Both Mr. and Mrs. Wigan were then engaged for the Olympic, under the management of the late unfortunate Watts, whose career and death are still fresh in the minds of our readers. There he performed in Mrs. Mowatt's comedy of *Fashion*, which was not so successful as it deserved to be. After a brief period, occupied in provincial engagements, Mr. and Mrs. Wigan were engaged at the Princess's by Messrs. Kean and Keeley, at which theatre they at present remain, established, and still increasing favourites with the patrons of that well-conducted establishment.

Mr. Wigan has had the honour of performing before Her Majesty at the private theatricals at Windsor Castle, where, in addition to his usual line of business, he has sustained several of the prominent characters in juvenile tragedy, his success in which has induced him to accept an engagement for the performance, at the Princess's, of the youthful heroic tragedy.

Mr. Wigan is an admirable light comedian, graceful and gentlemanly in his demeanour, and gifted by nature with a manly, well-proportioned figure, and a handsome and expressive countenance. His Frenchmen and his fops are, perhaps, the best on the stage; but his line of business is comprehensive, and all that he attempts he does well. Mrs. Wigan is seen to great advantage with her husband, in the representation of Frenchwomen, especially of the coquettish order: she is a very pleasing and vivacious comic actress, and deservedly a favourite.



### MR. EDWARD STIRLING.

THIS gentleman, though not at present prominently before the public, is one of the most industrious members of the profession. He possesses great judgment as a stage-manager, and has officiated in that capacity not only at many of our chief provincial theatres, but in metropolitan ones of all grades, from the Marylebone, Surrey, Adelphi, Olympic, Lyceum, Strand, to Covent-Garden, and is at present acting in that capacity at one of our London theatres.

Mr. Stirling was born on the 19th of April, 1809, at Thame, in Oxfordshire. In early life a merchant's counting-house was the limited arena of his exertions; but having acquired a love for theatrical literature, he sought to be admitted one of a society of amateurs, and in company with them made his first appearance on the mimic scene. At the private theatres in Catherine Street, Gloucester Street, &c., he occasionally poured forth his tender wailing for the fair Juliet, or as the resolute Israelite insisted on his bond; but pleasure and duty are steeds that will not go quietly together, pleasure ever running too fast for his companion, and Mr. Stirling's daily duties were not very sedulously attended to; notice was given him by his employers, the balance was struck, and without hesitation he at once embraced the theatrical profession, dazzled by its attractions, and forgetful of its vicissitudes. This step he has since had no cause to repent, for a short career transformed him into the triple character of actor, manager, and author. Indeed in the latter capacity he became one of the most prolific and popular dramatic writers of the present day. He can reckon pieces by dozens, played at every theatre in the metropolis with success; and, in some cases, success of no ordinary character, but drawing crowded houses for many weeks together. Indeed all his productions exhibit a remarkable tact, combined with good taste, and a perfect knowledge of the capabilities and business of the stage. He has the painter's and actor's eye for effect, and can at once, as by intuition, seize upon the most salient and dramatic points of a subject.

The London public have not lately had an opportunity of judging of Mr. Stirling's talents as an actor, but it may be sufficient to state that he has acted the second parts in tragedy to the late Edmund Kean; also to Messrs. Macready and Vandenhoff; representing Richmond, Macduff, Gratiano, Wilford, &c., besides playing the leading melodrama and comedy while at the Adelphi; where also on many occasions he acted for the late Frederic Yates, O'Smith, and Lyon, with decided success. He stands high as an actor of character parts, creations which require a man to divest himself of his own individuality, and assume another nature; in his representation of these he displays much judgment, and a close study of humanity in every phase of its inexhaustible and ever-changing variety. A slight eccentricity of manners, or a hideous moral deformity, are each by him truthfully depicted. The Rag-Picker of Paris, Newman Noggs in *Nicholas Nickleby*, St. Hilaire in *A Soldier's Fortune*, Ishmael Lyons the Bondsman, in Albert Smith's drama of that name, Charles the Twelfth, Gratiano, Cassio, Sir Benjamin Backbite, William in *Black Eyed Susan*, all afford evidence of the truth of these assertions.

MRS. HENRY VINING was born at Lancaster; she is a daughter of the late Mr. W. Quantrill, who for many years held a responsible position at Drury Lane Theatre; so that Mrs. Vining may be said to be an actress by inheritance. Having at an early period given signs of histrionic talent, Miss Quantrill was educated for the stage, and made her first essay in some obscure provincial theatre in the character of Belvedera, her performance of which was so full of promise, that she received an offer from the manager of the Hereford circuit, where she accordingly appeared as Juliet, and at once ingratiated herself into the good opinion of her audience. Her next engagement was at Birmingham, where she appeared in *The Gamester*, in conjunction with Mr. Charles Kemble, and his gifted daughter Miss Fanny Kemble, by both of whom she was highly complimented, besides receiving a most gratifying reception from a densely crowded house. She then proceeded to Liverpool, where she made her bow as Josephine to Mr. Macready's Werner.

When Miss Huddart (now Mrs. Warner) left Liverpool to appear in the metropolis, she was succeeded by Mrs. Vining, who was engaged for leading business for three years, and during that period performed the principal female characters to Messrs. Macready, Charles Kean and James Wallack.

An offer from the late Mr. Davidge brought her to London, where she made her first appearance at the Surrey Theatre, in the drama of *Crichton*, and rapidly became a great and deserved favourite. Here she remained until a change of management took place, when with much regret she took leave of her numerous friends and patrons, and of the scene where she had gained a well-earned reputation for her chaste and finished representation of the characters allotted to her. She is at present fulfilling an engagement at the City of London Theatre.

Mrs. Vining is surrounded by a host of friends, who equally appreciate her histrionic talents, and the endearing amiability of her private character.





MRS VINING AND MR EDWARD STIRLING  
IN HIS  
DRAMA OF THE RAG PICKER OF PARIS  
FATHER JEAN "Listen to me, for sixty years —"

*Engraved by Hollis, from a Daguerriotype by M. Hogg, Strand  
For Tattler's Drawing Room Table Book of Theatrical Portraits, Memoirs and Anecdotes*

